

DAVID TORY



# *Retribution*

THE STANFIELD CHRONICLES

This is a work of fiction. Although most of the characters, organizations, and events portrayed in the novel are based on actual historical counterparts, the dialogue and thoughts of these characters are products of the author's imagination.

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First edition





This book is dedicated to Jemma Tory  
and Jonah Rue Roberts



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—— AUTHOR'S NOTE ——

1620, the year the Separatists arrived in America, is sometimes considered to be the year the process of English settlements began in Northern Virginia, subsequently named New England. In fact, the New England coast had been the subject of numerous surveys, expeditions and attempted settlements during the previous twenty years.

The Separatists are considered to have travelled to an unknown country driven solely by their desire for religious freedom. In fact, many others explored and identified commercial opportunities in New England. The Separatists' desire was fed and supported by those who wanted settlements in New England for commercial gain and to protect New England from encroachment by the French in the North and the Virginia Company in the South.

The Stanfield Chronicles is the story of the opening up of New England, prior to and after the arrival of the Separatists, seen through the eyes of a young man called Isaac Stanfield.

*Exploration*, the first book of Isaac's chronicles, is available on Amazon in paperback, Ebook and Audio, as well as in book stores.

*Retribution* is the second book following on uninterrupted from *Exploration*. Isaac continues to observe and engage with most of the characters, real and imagined, that populated *Exploration*. However, new characters and historical events, good and bad, make their entrance and challenge Isaac as never before. When characters are added to a historical narrative, they tend to develop lives of their own

over which the author has little control, but the essential historical facts are there.

———— MAIN CHARACTERS ————  
(REAL NAMES IN BOLD)

<b>Allerton, Isaac</b>	Separatist
Beale, Silas	Mentor to the young Isaac
Braddock, James (“J.B.”)	Bosun aboard the <i>Sweet Rose</i>
<b>Bradford, William</b>	Separatist
Brown, Isaiah	Captain aboard the <i>Sweet Rose</i>
Burch Obediah (“Obi”)	Seaman aboard the <i>Sweet Rose</i>
<b>Bushrode, Richard</b>	Merchant
<b>Conant, Roger</b>	Settler
Dawkins, Johnny	Former ship’s boy aboard the <i>Sweet Rose</i>
<b>Endecott, Capt. John</b>	Settler
<b>Epenow</b>	Native America

Garcia, Ezra	Farmer in Bermuda
<b>Gorges, Sir Ferdinando</b> ("Sir F.")	Governor of Plymouth Fort
<b>Gorges, John</b>	First son of Sir Ferdinando
<b>Gorges, Robert</b>	Second son of Sir Fernando
Gosling, Jeremiah	Landlord of The Sun Inn. Lower Barton
Hallet, Jacob	Whitehouse's intermediary
Hardy, Kate	Farmer
Hook, Abraham	Smuggler
O'Hara, Jeannie	Housemaid
Pedro, Anthony	Fisherman in Bermuda
Potts, Annie	Isaac's housekeeper, born 4 September 4, 1597
<b>Samoset</b>	Native American
Sampson, Ned	Skipper of the <i>Swallow</i>
Scroud, Ebenezer	Isaac's business manager
Stanfield, Abigail	Daughter of Isaac, born 8 July 8, 1623

Stanfield, Isaac	Narrator, born 6 January 6, 1597
Stanfield, James	Son of Isaac and Aby, born 6 December 6, 1619
<b>Thomson, David</b>	Settler
<b>Tisquantum</b>	Native American
Tremaine, David	Secret agent of Sir Fernando
Tremont, Caleb	Cousin of Annie
Tremont, Seth	Cousin of Annie
Trescothick, Jason (Argie)	Tucker's Estate manager
<b>Tucker, Capt. Daniel</b>	Property owner in Bermuda
Turner (Capt), Charles	Sir Ferdinando's adjutant
<b>Vines (Doc), Richard</b>	Doctor and settler
<b>Weston, Thomas</b>	London merchant adventurer
<b>White, John</b> ("Patriarch", "P.")	Rector of Holy Trinity Church in Dorchester
<b>Whiteway, Will</b>	Friend of Isaac
<b>Woodhouse, Capt. Henry</b>	Governor of Bermuda


— MAPS —

*Southwest England*



*Plymouth*

*Fowey*

 *Isles of Scilly*



15 miles

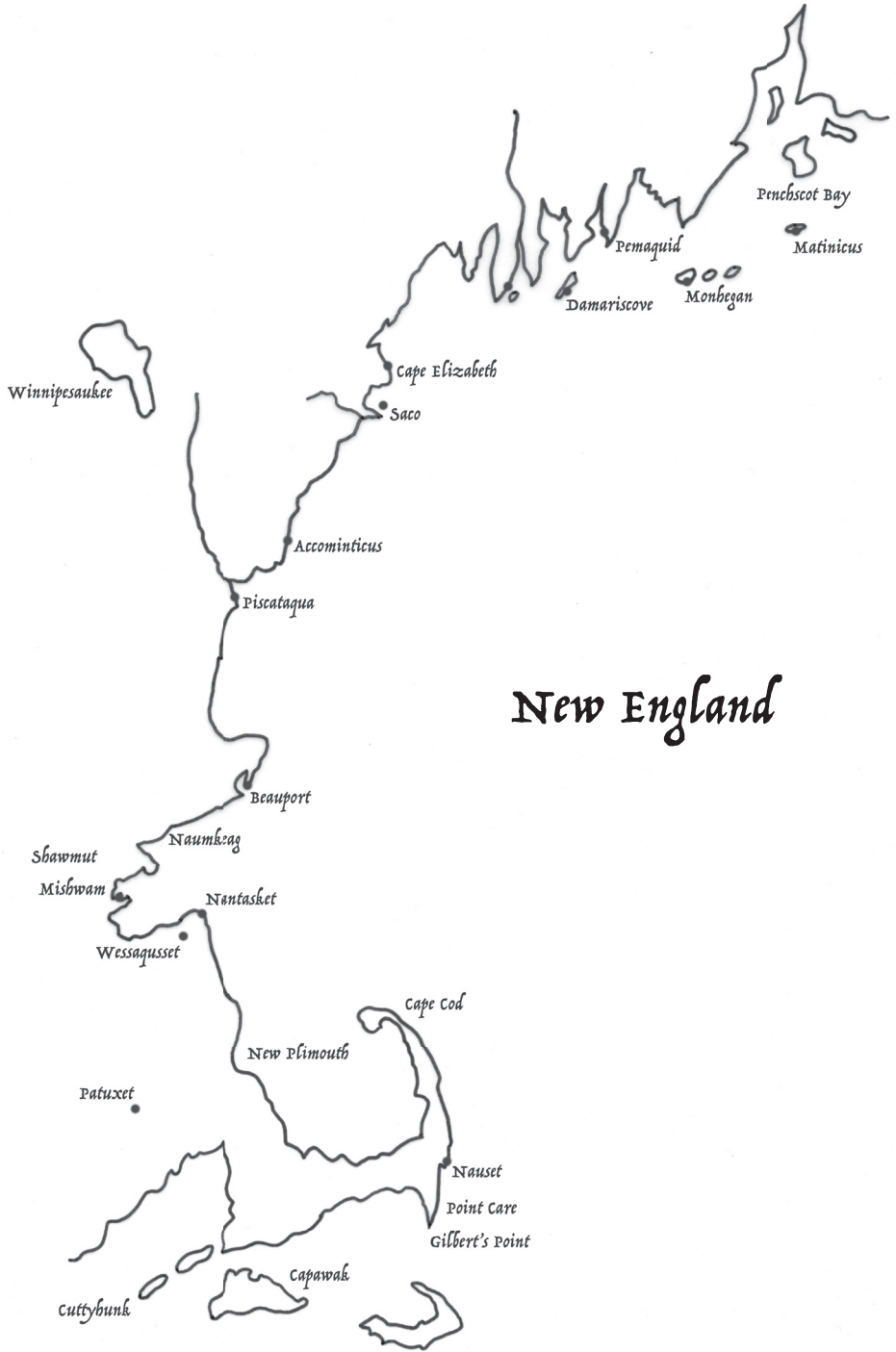
# Europe



200 miles

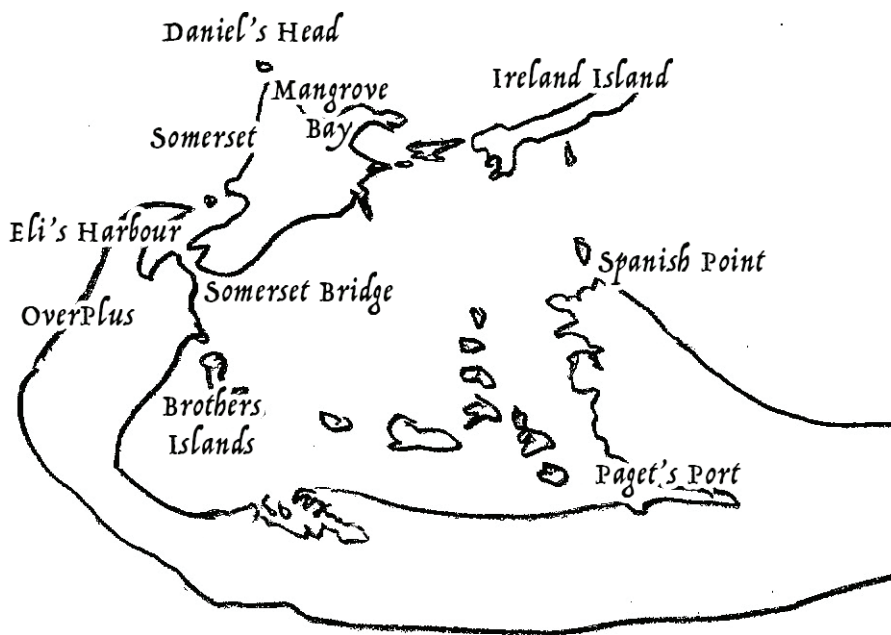
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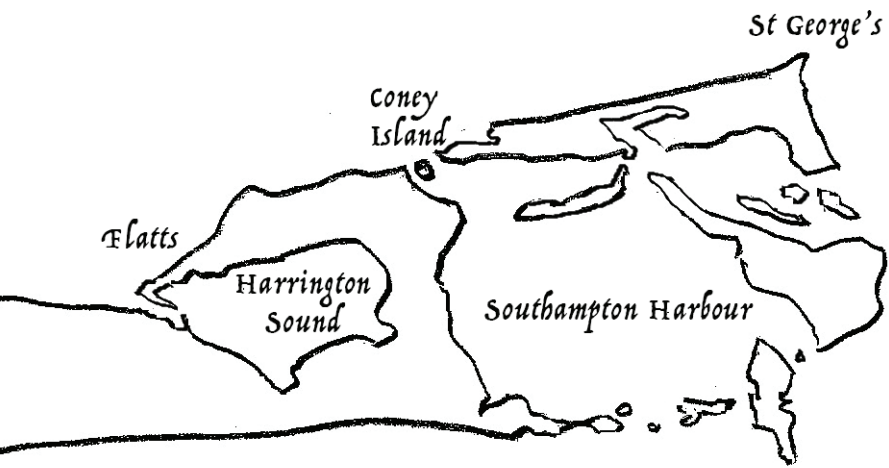




# New England

# Bermuda







## — PROLOGUE —

In 1613, a fire consumes much of the town of Dorchester, Dorset, England. A young man, Isaac Stanfield, is sent away by his mentor Silas Beale leaving his girl-friend Aby Baker. He joins the crew of the *Sweet Rose*, a merchantman under the command of Isaiah Brown sailing to La Rochelle, France. He decides to keep a journal which he sends on a regular basis to his closest friend Will Whiteway in Dorchester.

Sir Ferdinando Gorges (Sir F.), the Governor of Plymouth Fort and commander of military forces in the Southwest of England, is worried about the unrest in La Rochelle and its possible effect on trade between the two countries. He places a spy, David Tremaine, in La Rochelle. Isaac becomes involved, and after attracting the attention of Sir F. begins working for him, making the Minerva Inn in Plymouth his base. He meets Annie Potts, the landlord's niece. They become close friends.

The Atlantic coastal lands of North America have been claimed by the Spanish in the South, the French in the North, and the English in the middle region, who call their land Virginia. It is divided between two competing groups, Southern Virginia and Northern Virginia, renamed New England. Sir Ferdinando is the leader of the New England group and is very active in seeking settlements in there. Without them he fears encroachment from the French Canada and the South. He arranges to have a number of Indians captured

and brought back to England to be taught English, to be returned to New England as guides and interpreters for new expeditions. Isaac is asked by Sir Ferdinando to build trust with two of the Indians, Epenow and Assacomet. They are sent back, Epenow to the island of Capawak and Assacomet to Maine.

In Dorchester, the Reverend John White, Rector of Holy Trinity Church, has been Isaac's guardian since the death of his parents six years previously. Called the Patriarch (P.), he is the driving force in the rebuilding of Dorchester after the fire. The Patriarch is supportive of the reform movement in the Church of England. He is in touch with the Separatists who, facing persecution in England, fled to Leiden in Holland, but who now feel trapped. He is aware of Sir Ferdinando's interest in establishing settlements in New England and believes that it might be the perfect refuge for the Separatists. P. asks Isaac to keep him informed of Sir F.'s activities.

Isaac and Aby become engaged to be married. They plan to wed in December 1614 before he leaves in the *Sweet Rose* for New England at the beginning of March. A few days prior to the wedding, feeling conflicted about the marriage, Isaac takes his horse Maddie for a long ride. He disappears. In March just as the *Sweet Rose* is leaving, Isaac turns up, is taken on board and they set sail, no one ashore aware that he has reappeared. Isaac has suffered a partial loss of memory as a result of a serious head injury. They arrive at Monhegan Island in Maine and Isaac is captured by Indians. He is rescued by Assacomet, who on his return from England has taken a new name Samoset meaning 'he who travels far'. The crew of the *Sweet Rose*, unable to find Isaac, returns to England. Isaac makes his own way back.

Memory recovered, Isaac marries Aby and they move to Plymouth where Isaac and Aby are employed by Sir Ferdinando and Lady Ann Gorges. Isaac is sent to Spain in order to rescue an Indian, Tisquantum, from pirates and bring him back to England.

Sir F. is keen to prove that English settlers can survive New England winters. He sends an expedition under the command of Dr.

Richard Vines and his assistant David Thompson to Saco in Maine. Isaac accompanies them. There, they discover the local Indians are being ravaged by a sickness.

The Patriarch remains concerned about the Separatists' attempts to extricate themselves from their current situation. Sir Ferdinando realizes that if the Separatists can be persuaded to migrate to New England it will help solve his pressing need to confirm ownership through settlement. So both the Patriarch and Sir Ferdinando ask Isaac to visit Leiden. Isaac becomes involved in the intrigue to ensure the Separatists do resettle in New England.

Aby is close to Lady Ann and a much-loved member of the Gorges household, which Isaac finds difficult. However, their marriage is strong and they are devoted to each other. They have a son, James. After a very difficult birth Aby recovers. While in London, Lady Ann and Aby are stricken with the plague. Lady Ann dies and Aby is brought home to die with Isaac by her side. The story continues soon after her death.





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*Part 1*

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— CHAPTER 1 —

**Letter to Will**—*6 September 1620*

Dear Will,

Thank you and Elenor for coming down to Aby's funeral. Your support meant the world to me. Please thank Elenor for her sweet words. I know the loss of Aby must be hard for you both. We must keep thinking of all the good moments. When I do, Aby is right with me, as she will be always. Once more, I congratulate you both on your wedding. I said in my last letter we hoped to come to Dorchester at the end of the summer. How unutterably sad that Aby now won't be there—but I hope to come myself. The future is looking bleak right now, but when my mind settles, I will decide what I want to do. Please advise P. that the settlers are on their way to New England. He will be pleased.

I have no energy or desire to continue my journal. I enclose everything I have written since I gave you my last instalment.

I had a sorrowful meeting with Sir F. on his return to Plymouth. He and Lady Ann had been married thirty years and, as Sir F. said, they had been each other's closest companions and friends. He was destroyed by her death. Her funeral took place at their parish church in Clerkenwell, St. James, where her body was laid to rest. Sir F. was also distraught about the loss of Aby, saying she had become family. Another among the heartbroken was Sir Teddy Gorges, who sent me

a sad note by way of Sir F.

I went out to the Hoe as the *Mayflower* left. I stood brooding, watching as she slowly receded, to disappear behind the headland. A sense of overwhelming loss washed through me. We had agreed that our life together would be centered on Plymouth, but Aby has left me to go on her own journey. It almost seems that she is a part of the *Mayflower's* departure. I have a desperate, if irrational, desire to follow her.

*Isaac*

### **Letter to Isaac**—*18 September 1620*

Dear Isaac,

Oh dear, such a sad letter. I can barely imagine the loss you are suffering. But Aby hasn't sailed away—she lives on in James. Your attention must now be on your son. I'm sure Aby would have little patience for your brooding. Life goes on.

Come and visit us in Dorchester. It will give you time to shake off this dismal malaise. The Patriarch would be pleased to see you and help settle your mind. Also, please, please continue with your journal and send me your entries.

*Will*

### **Letter to Will**—*30 September 1620*

Dear Will,

Yes, James is my life. While he is a constant reminder of Aby, he is becoming a bundle of mischief with a strong character of his own. My dear friend Annie, too, is dealing with Aby's death in her own way. At the same time she has become, of necessity, a mother to James and my house-keeper; more than that, a welcome and comforting presence. She handles my moods with patience, for the most part.

Perhaps I should continue my journal. It might help me sort myself out. I would love to have come to Dorchester, but Sir Ferdinando keeps me busy.

*Isaac*

### **Journal entry—October – December 1620**

Over the following weeks my depressed state became worse. During the day I continued to work on Sir Ferdinando's collection of maps and reports on New England. Returning home from the Fort, I had James for my solace, but, once he was abed, I found the nights endless and almost welcomed the moments when his disturbed sleeping called me to him. I went for long rides on my faithful Maddie. She understood my moods and adjusted her behavior accordingly. I thought occasionally about the *Sweet Rose*. She was berthed in Weymouth over the winter. In Plymouth, her crew might have raised my spirits.

I didn't eat properly despite Annie's attempts. One night I drank too heavily. Annie saw the results when she arrived early the next morning and found me in the kitchen, with my head on the table and an empty bottle of brandy on the floor. She sprang into action before the wet nurse, Beth, arrived and James was up. She lifted my head by the hair and slapped me hard across the face, dragged me to my feet, and shoved my head under the water pump, berating me as she did. I said nothing. I had a splitting headache and was horrified at losing control, especially when James was in my care, and went to my room to clean up. Returning downstairs, with a curt apology I said I was going for a walk to clear my head, after which I had a meeting at the Fort. With that I left her, me mortified and Annie angry, pink of face with her fists tightly clenched on her hips.

At the Fort, I met with Sir F. and David Thomson. The purpose was to discuss the impending departure of David for New England. David, supported by Sir F., wanted to create a permanent settlement

on the Piscataqua River, where the Smith Isles could be a nearby shore base for fishing fleets and an alternative to Monhegan. He was going back to find a suitable location, build a fortified house, then return to England to find and take settlers back, including his family.

Sir F. was still recovering from the death of his wife and smiled ruefully.

“The three of us share much sorrow. Isaac, perhaps you should follow David’s example and take your mind off your loss. Why don’t you accompany him to New England?”

I couldn’t believe what I heard. Of course, I could escape this mental morass I was in and, by following Aby or the thought of her, put her to rest. I said that I would be happy to go. Sir F. said he wanted me to continue to evaluate opportunities for further settlement, provide advice and assistance to David, but, most importantly, to find out what was happening with the Separatists.

I returned home with a plan that gave me focus, its details becoming all-consuming in the few weeks before my departure. I was so caught up in that excitement I did not pay due attention to my family. Annie seemed pleased that I was re-invigorated but deeply concerned that I was leaving for New England. She asked about James. Who did I expect to look after him for the months I would be away? He needed the security of a loving family. She told me I was wallowing in the loss of Aby and disengaged from my responsibilities as James’ only parent, indeed the only family he had. Annie’s own sense of loss, frustration, and worry boiled over, and with quiet intensity she reproached me. I was shocked and bewildered. I had made an assumption about Annie, that she would always remain loyal and devoted to me. Her words were a rude awakening. I admitted she was right and that I needed her friendship and help. Eventually, accepting the inevitability of my departure, she agreed to take care of James.

I arranged with my business manager, Mr. Scroud, to provide her with financial support and whatever else she needed. I convinced myself that Annie would ensure that James had a secure, comfortable, and loving life while I was away. But James sensed my imminent

departure and reached out to me. On the 6th day of December, his first birthday, I went for a long walk to the Hoe with him on my back. How he enjoyed himself! For a short time the little lad attempted to walk, refusing my hand and stumbling over the rough sods of grass, falling frequently but never giving up. Before leaving, I persuaded Annie to ride with James and me. It was a crisp, cold morning, and we were wrapped in warm clothing, while Maddie and Tess blew smoke from their nostrils, or so we explained it to James, who was fascinated. Upon our return, Annie grew quiet, and every now and then I caught her looking at me with a sadness so profound that I was deeply unsettled and focused on James for the little time we had before I left them.

## — CHAPTER 2 —

### **Journal entry**—*December 1620 – January 1621*

We sailed on the *Jonathan* out of Plymouth on 15 December 1620. The tiny figures of Annie and James on the Hoe tore at my heart. A last look in their direction and I turned my head to the west. We took the southern route skirting the Azores. Sailing conditions were not the best so late in the year with a fierce storm coming out of the Bay of Biscay, which we weathered without loss or significant damage. The weather improved as we moved south. It gave David and me time to talk about his commitment to settle in New England. I was caught up in his passion. We spoke of those we had left behind. He talked about the pain of the recent death of his child and the conflict between staying home to comfort his wife, Amyse, and venturing overseas to build his family's future. He wanted to accept God's judgement, but nothing lessened the hurt. To him, grief was manageable only if he trusted God. We talked about Aby, and he asked how I was coping with her loss. I said I was not so trusting in God but needed to eliminate the mental image I had of Aby leaving me, sailing away on the *Mayflower*. David looked puzzled.

"Isaac, why shouldn't Aby be allowed to sail away? Her soul is in God's hands. That might not comfort you, but better that you have a sense of her spirit, freed from a lonely grave in a cold and dismal churchyard. Ultimately, whatever means you use, you must learn to



accept Aby's death so you can move on with your life."

He asked about James. I was loath to talk about the beloved son I had left behind, but under his gentle insistence I found myself opening up about both James and Annie. David listened intently.

"James needs a mother and you a wife. Annie, clearly, has the qualities to be both. You seem inclined toward her. What are you waiting for?"

I heard him and attempted to push aside the grief.

At another time David mentioned hearing that Captain Thomas Dermer, sea captain and explorer, had been killed. He had been sent to New England by Sir F. The story was that Dermer had sought out Epenow on Capawak and had been ambushed. He had escaped sorely wounded with one of his crew. The rest had been killed, and Dermer died of his wounds a short time later. I couldn't believe the massacre had been the work of Epenow, but David's recounting made it difficult to think otherwise. I wondered if I would meet my old friend again and, if so, under what circumstances.

We were becalmed for a week mid-Atlantic. I took the opportunity to celebrate my 24th birthday with a swim. A few hardy souls joined me, jumping or diving into the clear, cold, blue-green sea and swimming round the *Jonathan*. For those who didn't wish to join our frigid endeavor, a sail, tied at the corners, was lowered into the sea and filled with water in which the crew splashed and frolicked. It was all lighthearted, and everyone benefited.

### **Journal entry—February 1621**

Arrival in New England. We anchored on the west side of the Smith Isles, 12 February. The following day, we sailed into the Piscatqua River and moored on the western shore in the entrance to a small creek. Soundings gave us further entry to a tight but secure anchorage, which David subsequently named Little Harbor.

The weather—bleak and cold, with the ground frozen and snow

covered—was not conducive to building. Apart from making excursions in search of a good building location, we all stayed on board the *Jonathan*. David decided on the location for his new home, a raised piece of land on a peninsula close to where we were moored. The site commanded views of the sea from the northeast to the southeast and of the river to the north and northwest. While David embraced the future, I could not stop thinking about the past.

Grieving is such a solitary occupation, especially if, as for me, the benign hand of God is doubted. No one enjoys sharing someone else's sorrow. I missed Aby every moment. Every memory seemed to have her present. My grief and Aby were entwined. I needed to capture the essence that was Aby and extract her from the black morass in my head. If I could separate her from my own self-interest, I could let her go, as David advised, and remember Aby with pleasure, not pain. I took to thinking of grief as a tangible object, something I could hold, shape, and dissect, an adversary to be defeated.

The journey and David's persuasion helped me to free Aby. She left me, and my grief softened to a sad acceptance. With that, I could think more rationally. I had further conversations with David that made me realize how much I had mistreated Annie, and I was able to promise him that on my return I would seek to make full amends. I felt a lift in my spirits and, eventually, full enjoyment of the circumstances of our expedition.

When the weather turned to our advantage, a few weeks after our arrival, David's construction crew began unloading their building materials. Trees were cut, the layout of the fort marked out, and foundations dug, though with difficulty as the ground was still mostly frozen. David was already calling the fort "Pannaway." I asked why, and he told me that Pannaway was the local Abenaki Indians' name for the place. It means "where water spreads out." While David and his crew constructed the fort, I built a hut in the Indian manner, as I had been taught at Saco on our trip in 1616-1617. When finished the round structure covered in bark and marsh grass became the model for other huts to be constructed for the rest of the party and for storage.

It was good to get off the *Jonathan* and live ashore. I explored on my own along the shoreline, the dark marsh-fed streams, clean and swiftly flowing river and the wooded countryside beyond, beckoning to me and stretching seemingly forever. I made contact with local natives. They were wary, and communication was difficult, but I was able to introduce myself as one who had spent a year at Saco a few years previously. They had heard of the English who had tried to help the sick there. We had a good supply of food aboard that we had brought from England, and we expected to hunt for fresh meat, but we needed to gain acceptance locally so that we could barter for fruit and vegetables from the Indians' winter store, such as berries, maize, and beans. We had not brought farmers with us as we would not be here long enough for a harvest. The Indians proved adept at bartering, so everyone was happy.

I was told that there was a tribe of Indians not far away who had been in Saco. I was keen to meet with them and persuaded the locals to guide me to the tribe's village. David too was eager to build good relations with the Indians as well as to understand the tribal politics of the area. We agreed to go as soon as the weather and conditions permitted.

### **Journal entry—*April 1621***

By early April the weather had improved and enough ice had melted that we were able to set off on our expedition, accompanied by two local guides. The first part of the journey was by canoe and we paddled 35 miles north up river. We had explored the lower river during my Saco journey and David had explored further on his more recent trip, but, as we paddled north, we were taken into new lands, more bountiful with wildfowl, game, and timber. We saw a large hill, a clear landmark to the east, that our guides called Sassanows, and which I remembered from Captain Smith's map, drawn on his 1614 voyage, as Snadoun Hill. David and I took our turns paddling. At the

start, forgetting what we had mastered previously, we were all effort and little progress, but our guides were patient and we relearned that it was rhythm and economy of movement that mattered.

We eventually landed in the evening on the southern shore of a tree-lined lake, dark and mysterious in the gloaming, with the haunting cries of a bird identified by our guides as Medawisla, which David translated as “spirit bird.” The next morning we continued our journey on foot, and for many hours we followed well-worn Indian trails to the northwest. The weather was good for walking, with no insects, though still cold. I asked our guides whether there was any trouble likely with local Indians. They smiled and said all was peaceful at the moment. David, as interpreter, made communication much easier.

Around midday we came to an Indian village of a tribe called the Winnepesaukee, on the shore of a lake the size of an inland sea. Local people began to approach us cautiously, armed and curious. Put at ease by our guides, we entered the village. A fort had been built in the Indian style on raised land on the lakeshore, with huts scattered around. Each hut had its garden, and we saw that spring planting had already happened. We were taken into the fort and asked to wait. It had been four years since we left Saco, but the similarity of this fort brought everything back to me. When Askuwhteau came out of the main hut and stood on the stage looking down on us, somehow I was not surprised. I had changed in four years, gaining in bulk and growing a full beard. I looked up at him, and for a moment nothing was said. Then Askuwhteau threw his head back with a peal of laughter.

“Maaaaa Chick. It is you.”

He ran down the steps, and we embraced. He then turned to David, whom he recognized as the one-time doctor to his people, and greeted him with much respect.

“Come, I have something to show you.”

We followed him up the steps to his hut. Inside on an end wall was a large bear skin. The bear, the *machk* I had killed. While we were talking, I heard light footsteps coming up the steps and two Indians

entered, Mingan and Kitchi. More joyful greetings. They had been told that two English had come, and one was called Machk. Our arrival was reason enough for a celebration, with music, dancing, and a feast. They needed little encouragement even though a wedding ceremony was to take place in three days' time. David and I were pressed to join them as their honored guests. Meantime, we had much to talk about. We had last seen the three of them standing motionless, watching us as the *Sweet Rose* sailed away from Saco in April 1617. They had been the last to leave their stricken village. The rest of their sorely depleted tribe had already moved inland and had joined the Winnepesaukee with two neighboring tribes to become part of an expanded, substantial, and, most importantly, self-sufficient tribe. It was to their main village we had come.

Askwheteau had succeeded the previous Sagamore of the expanded tribe, who had been killed in an ambush by a rogue band of Micmacs. The Winnepesaukee was a member of the Pennacook confederacy, which was part of the Algonquin nation. The Piscataquas were of the same confederacy. The Pennacooks were centered on the northern Merrimack River at a place called Naumkeag, and their chief was Passaconaway. In long conversations with Askwheteau it became clear that if David wanted to build a peaceful settlement, he would need Passaconaway's approval and support. It seemed we might already be considered favorably because of our efforts in Saco, but David would need to show deference, which he was keen to do.

Having achieved his objective of obtaining a better understanding of the Indians he would need to deal with, David was now anxious to get back to oversee the building of Pannaway. We had agreed, however, to attend the upcoming wedding ceremony. During the days leading up to it, Kitchi and Mingan took us by canoe onto Lake Winnepesaukee, a strong wind from the northeast keeping us close to shore. The open water was covered in whitecaps and serious chop, with uncountable wild fowl, quiet on the water in sheltered coves or wheeling and calling to one another over the lake. We camped at night on the lakeshore, devouring the duck and fish we had caught

during the day. We arrived back at the village the night before the wedding.

The day dawned bright and clear. As guests of honor, David and I sat with Askuwheteau in a semi-circle with the marriage couple, their families, and guests around a spread of meat, vegetables, and fruits. It reminded me of paintings I had seen of royal feasts at Hampton Court. Platters of roasted game and salmon; bowls of beans, squash, and corn; dishes of duck eggs, nuts, and berries; cakes large and small; flagons filled with maple syrup and a variety of teas. Invited to eat, we set to with enthusiasm. It was a supremely noisy and happy feast with much laughter, music, and banter. Children, given the freedom to eat and play, added to the bedlam. After the feast, the couple disappeared.

“What now? Are they married?” I asked Askuwheteau.

“No, not quite. They go separately to dress in their most formal clothes. They will come back.”

While we waited, the remains of the feast were cleared away. By now it was late afternoon. We then seated ourselves in a wide circle around a fire pit. The music, which had played in the background until now, began in earnest with drums, bells, and singing. First the woman and her friends returned in a procession, followed by the man with his friends. The couple then sat inside the circle while the guests, led by Askuwheteau, stood. He started the dance by making jaunty steps sideways to his left in time with the drums. One by one the people joined in, following Askuwheteau’s steps. A shaman led the singing, with the guests providing a continual chorus of chanting and handclapping. It was lively, noisy, with everyone, even the children, joining in. During the evening a number of formal and ritual dances were performed to bring good fortune and fertility to the couple. After the dancing, another meal was provided. Askuwheteau saw my questioning look and smiled in reply.

“Yes, they are now married.”

The celebrations ended when the man retired to his hut to the cheers of all the guests. The woman, pink with anticipation and

embarrassment, was brought by her attendant friends, with further noisy banter from the guests, to her husband. They were then left to celebrate their marriage alone.

The following day, David and I sat with Askuwheteau and talked about establishing a trading relationship with him and his people. I said we would both be returning to England a little later in the year but that David would be back shortly thereafter. We told him we were interested in bringing back the products he wanted—the metal tools we had shown him at Saco, from spades and hoes to rakes and saws, even woolen clothes like those we were wearing. His women were interested in cooking implements and pans. David promised that on his return he would bring these items. In exchange, he sought animal pelts, especially beaver, medicinal plants such as sassafras, and wood for ships' spars and masts. Askuwheteau nodded agreement, gave us his blessing, and told us to come back to his village as soon as we were able. We returned to the Piscataqua guided by our two friends, where a canoe was waiting. We camped overnight and, paddling downstream, by mid-afternoon next day we were approaching David's future home. Much work had been done in our seven days' absence. Logs sawn, and the outer walls rising. The fireplace had been set, made with bricks transported from England. We thanked Mingan and Kitchi and bade them farewell.

## — CHAPTER 3 —

### **Journal entry—*May 1621***

I was mindful of the fact that Sir F. wanted me to find out what had happened to the Separatists: whether they had arrived safely and, if so, whether they had ended up in Patuxet, as David Tremaine and I had agreed with Captain Jones of the *Mayflower*. A shallop had been shipped over in the *Jonathan*, and I asked David Thomson if I could borrow it along with a crew. He made two sailors available to me. We were provisioned for two weeks, and on a clear day in mid-May, with light winds from the west, we sailed out of the Piscataqua under lateen main and stays'l to make our way southeast towards Cape Ann. Four hours later we turned south as we started to round the Cape. The wind had increased, but we were well sheltered in the lee of that rocky headland. It was our intention to sail round into Massachusetts Bay and shelter in Beauport harbor, but as we sailed clear of the headland, the wind became ferocious and filled to the northwest. Heavy clouds were sweeping swiftly towards us, promising bad weather.

We were now in a quandary. We couldn't head west to make Beauport, as the wind was too strong. We furled the main and continued under the stays'l, headed as high as we could manage, and battled our way southwest. Night fell, and we were hard put to it to keep our small craft from foundering. The rain had come, and with the confusion of waves and the howling wind against current, we



shipped water at an alarming rate. We took turns with one man on the helm and two men bailing, shouting all the while to make ourselves heard. I was now concerned that we were being set east and in the dark could be swept onto the end of Cape Cod.

We were becoming exhausted, so I eased the helm and headed southeast. The shallop was immediately easier to handle, the wind behind us and the waves rolling under our stern. The reefed stays'l was enough to keep us ploughing through the water, with bailing no longer a necessity. Thirty minutes per man on the helm while the other two attempted to rest. We had our oilskins, but in the open shallop we quickly became soaked and cold. At a certain point in the night, we heard the roar of surf off our starboard bow. We saw nothing, but the sound moved abeam and the noise of the wind reduced somewhat. We were in the lee of Cape Cod. Even in the lee the wind was strong, still driving us south. All we could do was hang on and wait for daylight.

Next morning—cold, tired, wet, and miserable—we were a mile or more off the seemingly endless beaches of the Atlantic coast of Cape Cod, moving rapidly south. The wind had not abated and, blowing offshore, prevented us from heading in. With difficulty we were able to maintain our course. After many hours the shoreline edged west of south and the wind seemed to follow. We did likewise, desperately trying to point the bows towards land. With the stays'l driving us we were unable to luff up and the strength of the wind nearly stopped us dead in the water. Under torrential rain and poor visibility, the wind now filling to the north, we finally managed to pass the entrance to a natural harbor, which I remembered as Malabarre on Samuel de Champlain's map. The wind picked up as we cleared a point of land, Champlain's Cap Batturier. We saw some more sheltered water ahead and were able to steer towards a low spit of land that stood out from the mainland. The chop became awkward. It was shoaling rapidly. As we cleared the lee, we were heading southwest, and we were about halfway to the end of the spit when we grounded. The boat heeled, rounded into wind, and stuck fast.

I shouted at my crew for one to take the helm and the other to unreef the stays'l and haul it taut amidships. I jumped over the side into waist-deep water and started pushing the stern toward the wind. It wouldn't budge. I shouted to loosen the sail. Immediately I felt the boat start to move. The bows started coming round. The crew realized what I was trying to do and needed no further instruction. The bowman played the stays'l sheets to keep the boat heeled hard over to reduce draught, and the helmsman played the rudder to keep the bows moving away from the wind. The current was strong in our favor. It was difficult for me to keep my feet. The wind was gusting, and when, in a lull, a big wave surged under the boat, I rammed hard with all my weight against the larboard quarter. I felt a lurch, and then, in an instant, she was free. At that moment, the wind gust-ed and started backing to the west. The boat leapt forward, and I fell full length into the water. By the time I found my feet, I was half drowned. Coughing up water and gasping for air, I looked around. The boat was a good 20 yards off and moving south quickly. There was no way they could turn the boat. The helmsman yelled something that was blown away in the wind and noise. I was stranded.

I took stock. I was in surging water, several hundred yards from land. Cold and exhausted, I started wading and semi-swimming towards the shore. As I moved landward, which was towards the west, I was being taken south by the wind and current. I had only so much land to aim for, which stretched away to the south, ending in a dune-covered point, beyond which was open water. I kept stumbling into deeper pockets and going under. I was gaining, slowly, but it was a battle to keep my legs moving. Finally I was wading knee deep and then fell onto a steeply sloping, sandy beach. I crawled up the beach, dug myself into the sand to escape the wind, and slept.

Some time later I woke, half-buried with sand blown over me. I climbed the beach to a high point and found I was on a long, thin island, of an approximate southeast-northwest axis. From the map I had been working on for Sir F., I knew that Capawak Island, the land of Epenow, was to the west. There was another island directly

to the southeast. I presumed there would be tribal people on Cape Cod to the north—possibly even the Separatists. Where were the shallop and my two crewmen? I hoped they had found shelter and would wait till the storm passed and the wind changed sufficiently for them to try to find me. How long that might be, if ever, I had no way of knowing. I needed to find shelter, freshwater, and food. Northeast, the island was narrow, with few trees, mostly dune grass. Southwest, the island was significantly wider, with many wildfowl, suggesting freshwater and food, and a few trees and dips in the ground, which could mean shelter. On the lookout for my crew, I headed southwest with the wind at my back. No rain, so the wind, which backed and filled, was a drying wind. Stretching out, I worked my muscles and started to feel some warmth.

After an hour's brisk walk I was coming to the end of the island. The shoreline was covered by seals. As I approached them they objected noisily and slid into the sea, with just their heads showing as they watched me walk by. I passed a pond, the water drinkable, in a dip with some trees on the north side. By the water's edge, it was sheltered, with plenty of wood, some reasonably dry under the pine trees—an ideal location to settle. I built a stack of wood and laid a pile of dry pine needles and twigs. As I wandered round the pond I saw a large pile of clam shells near the remains of a substantial fire pit. Evidently this was a place that the locals visited. Clams I knew all about from Saco. The ocean tide was ebbing, which exposed a series of large flats of open sand. I walked out onto the sand and with my dirk started digging a hole, then scooping out the mud and sand. Within a few minutes and several holes dug, I found my first clam. Thirty minutes later I had a dozen large clams. With the tide beginning to flood, I headed back to my shelter and quickly started a fire. I was out of the wind, and the warmth of the fire made it all cozy. I placed the closed clams in the embers to cook them in their own juices. A short time later, I had a feast that I enjoyed like no other. I re-stoked my fire and settled in for the night.

I was woken in the early morning by a sharp tap on my foot.

I opened my eyes to find a spear hovering over my chest, held by an Indian. He had a companion, similarly armed beside him. They backed off and gestured for me to get up. One went behind me and quickly tied my wrists together with a leather cord and took my dirk. Kicking sand over the remains of my fire, they pointed the way and we set off, one in front of me, the other behind with his spear ready. We walked north along the western shore to a canoe, hauled up on the beach. A canoe trip took us northwest towards the mainland and west along the coast. After about two hours we beached, and I was taken to a village and gestured to sit under guard in the center of an open area. I had gathered an interested crowd, who stood round me in rowdy conversation. A clearly important Indian arrived, and way was made for him through the crowd. He appeared to be the Sagamore. I got to my feet and bowed to him. He walked round me, examining the specimen his men had landed. Behind me he cut the cord binding my wrists.

“Who are you?”

I looked at him in surprise. He spoke English. Without thinking, I replied, “I am Machk.”

He stepped back and looked hard at me.

“I have heard of an Englishman called Machk, the bear. But that was somewhere else at another time. Open your shirt. Machk had the mark of the bear.”

I did. He saw the faint marks of the bear claw. He nodded.

“You are English. But not, I think, part of the people who came in the winter.”

It seemed that the Separatists had arrived.

“No, I last saw those people in England many months ago. I sailed in a small boat from the Piscataqua to try to find them. I was stranded yesterday in the storm. Then your people found me.”

“What is your English name?”

“Isaac Stanfield.”

The Sagamore nodded. Again he surprised me.

“Epenow told me about his time in England.”

I told him he spoke good English. He said that he had dealt with English fishermen and traders farther north. His tribe had endured a bad experience with the English, which was why I had been bound and brought as a captive to him. It was not in his interest to have anything to do with me, so he told me I would be taken to Epenow on Capawak.

“Will you go willingly or as a captive?”

“Willingly.”

“So be it.”

So continued a day-long journey on foot and by canoe. We landed on the north shore of Capawak Island close to a village. My escorts left me after handing me over to the locals with instructions that I didn't understand. I was immediately treated much more roughly. I was re-bound and led into the village being pushed and abused verbally. Confused, I kept my head down and waited to see what developed. At one stage, I was approached by an old man, angry and accusing, with paint on his face. He shouted at me, questions possibly. The few words I knew meant nothing to him. I said “Epenow” several times. He looked puzzled, trying to interpret my words. Meantime, his people continued to make merry round me. They clearly wanted to have fun with me and were trying to persuade him to let them do so. The man went away, and the crowd set to. I was stripped and bound to a post with my wrists tied above my head. For a long time, I was the center of a ritual dance, complete with drums. The dance started slowly and gradually built into a more aggressive and threatening form.

Then all of a sudden it stopped. The dancers backed off and sat in a semicircle in front of me. Three women appeared, walked through the circle, and approached me. They seemed excited. Two knelt while the third came close and put her hand on my chest. Naked to the waist, she seemed aroused. Her eyes were slightly hooded, her mouth open, the tip of her tongue showing. She tugged at the hair on my chest. It seemed strange to her. Her finger traced some of the scars. She was intrigued by the faint bear claws. She recognized the old arrow wound.

She looked up into my eyes, smiling, her eyes still hooded. Then, with a nod, she took from her skirt a large clam shell, and I knew what was going to happen. Oh God, flaying! What a way to die.

I stared at her, determined to show nothing. She placed the sharp edge of the shell at the base of my neck and drew it slowly across my chest, left, then right, cutting through the skin. Then she started pushing and sawing the clamshell down under the skin. The other two women approached, each with a clam shell. Through the pain and the flow of blood I willed myself to freeze. No sound, no sign. I tried to put the agony into a pocket in my mind and examine it as an object separate from me. The seated Indians watched and encouraged the women to continue.

A sharp word of command, and suddenly frightened, the women stepped back. I looked towards the sound. Epenow. He came up to me and stared into my eyes.

“You are a brave man. But I knew that. Welcome to my land, Isaac Stanfield.”

“Good to see you again, Epenow. Are you well?”

It was no good. I was losing control over the pain and the loss of blood. My eyes closed, and I slumped against my bindings. An order from Epenow and I was cut loose and carried to a hut. There an old woman stanching the flow, wiped me clean, smeared something on my wound, and stitched it up. I was given a potion to drink and quickly fell asleep. I slept through the night. When I woke in the morning, the pain had subsided to a throb. I lay confused, wondering what would happen next. Thinking back over the previous evening, I could not shake the sense that Epenow had arrived earlier than I had originally assumed. In my mind I saw a tall figure standing in the background, watching the torture.

While I was contemplating the significance of this, a woman entered the hut. It was the woman who had first approached me—the torturer. She knelt down beside me, gently put her fingers on my wound, and with a feather touch stroked its length. I took the woman’s wrist and pulled it away. She looked surprised, leant back, shook

her arm to release my hand, and stared at me. I glared in return, and she left. Some time later, Epenow came in, and I struggled to sit up. He put an arm round my shoulder and settled me against some cushions.

“You spurned my sister’s attempt to make amends. That was not friendly.”

“Epenow, enough of this. Tell me why was I treated this way?”

He told me how he had returned from England with a hatred for the English and a deep-set fear that if they came to his land they would turn it into the same terrible, crowded, poverty-stricken country that he had witnessed. In addition, his people had suffered from the diseases that the English had brought. The worst thing was the massacre of his people by an English raiding party the previous year. He said I was lucky to still be alive—Captain Dermer not so lucky. The Sagamore who had sent me to Capawak was the only person who knew something of Epenow’s history in England. When I was delivered, my escorts had mentioned to the first Indian who had met us that I was a friend of Epenow. He had immediately gone to find Epenow, who was hunting down the coast. When I was taken to the village, however, that message had become lost. I was a hated Englishman ripe for slaughter. Epenow said that he had a decision to make when he saw me tied to the post. His people were right to feel the way they did and to express their anger accordingly. However, he considered me a friend, perhaps the only English friend he had. He said that I needed to leave as soon as I was able. It was too confusing to his people to have a hated enemy treated as a guest in their village. He would see that I was fed and left in peace. When I had recovered sufficiently, I would be taken to a place close to the English settlers in Patuxet and left to find my own way there. He would not allow his people to have any contact with them.

For the next several days, I was largely ignored, except for the old woman, who returned my clothes, cleaned and mended, brought food, and checked my wound. Epenow came by a couple of times and we talked about his experiences in England. I asked him about

Dermer and Tisquantum, who had been to Capawack the previous year. He said that Dermer's last visit without Tisquantum, who was now with Massasoit, had been a disaster, with misunderstandings leading to strong anger among his people. My arrival had rekindled that ongoing animosity into violent action. I said that the settlers were determined to stay and I was sure that they were the first of a flow of English people who wished to make their homes here. Would it not be better to learn to live with them? It was a huge country and, despite all the horrors that Epenow remembered about his time in England, settlers could bring a multitude of benefits. Epenow was silent, a proud and unbending man, but he listened. I am lucky he counted me as a friend. I was allowed to walk outside the village to regain my strength, escorted at all times. No words were spoken. My escorts had the duty to guide and protect me from harm, nothing more. I was taken to the shore and allowed to strip and bathe. Once night fell, I was confined to my hut with a guard outside.

After about ten days of recovery, I was taken by canoe with four Indians in a westerly direction to a passageway between the mainland and an island. The tidal current was strong, and we hugged the shore, staying well clear of a dangerous looking whirlpool. We came out into an enormous bay and headed north for two hours. The sea was calm, the wind light, and the sky clear with bright sunshine, a good day to be on the water. We paddled past a chain of islands with hills, trees, and open fields. The more we progressed, the more convinced I became that England's future was bound up with this extraordinary land. We landed and headed north. After a time my escorts stopped and pointed the way to continue north. As they prepared to leave, one of them handed me my dirk. I was surprised, as I had assumed it gone forever. I smiled my thanks. They looked at me with expressionless faces, turned, and retraced their steps. I watched them go, and they did not look back.

I continued north, through forests that had been cleared of undergrowth, across open lands and past ponds. I saw much game, wildfowl, and deer. I had water and food, given to me at the start of the



journey. Despite the walking I had done to recover my strength, I was still weak. After a few miles, I found a suitable tree and sat in its shade with my back resting against the trunk, the sun high and directly south. The warmth and gentle breeze lulled me to sleep. I was woken by someone shaking my shoulder. An Englishman, obviously a settler, asked me who I was. After giving him my name I told him I was attempting to reach the settlers from the *Mayflower*. He studied me.

“You are not well. You look feverish. The plantation is less than a mile away. Can you walk that far?”

I told him I could. The settlers had built a village, comprising a number of round huts covered in reeds, similar to the huts we had made in Saco, and a few houses with rough-hewn walls, thatched roofs, and chimneys, all clustered together on high ground. We entered the village and attracted a small crowd of people—men and women, plus a few children. They looked thin, unwell, some even desperate. I needed to know more about them, but it was clear I needed some attention myself. At that moment, my two erstwhile crewmates approached me. I waved and then staggered. They caught me as I fell. I was taken to a house and put to bed. Someone fed me broth, and I fell into a deep sleep.

Next day I arose and went outside. The first person I saw was Isaac Allerton, who was on his way to visit me. He asked how I was and said he would not have recognized this disreputable, bearded character as the smart young man he had met in Leiden a few years back. He took me to meet William Bradford, who was now the leader of the plantation. My crewmates had given them an account of the Thomson voyage to Piscataqua and our attempt to sail down to visit them. Bradford and Allerton expressed surprise and thanks that I had survived.

I told them that Sir Ferdinando Gorges’ Council for New England had received royal approval and could now confirm their right to settle. Sir Ferdinando was endeavoring to promote and support settlements throughout New England with land grants, and I told them of

the many being planned. They seemed heartened, but they had endured a bad winter. Of the hundred or so who came over in the *Mayflower*, half had died, including Christopher Martin and John Carver, who had been elected leader on Martin's death. Bradford put the sickness down to malnutrition, bitter cold weather, and inadequate housing. Captain Jones and the *Mayflower* had stayed through the winter, thank God. In doing so, Jones had probably saved the settlement from extinction, but he had lost half his crew to the same dire conditions. The *Mayflower* had sailed for England in early April.

They told me of the fortuitous circumstances in which they had come to where they were now settled—a place they called New Plimouth. More extraordinary were the appearances of Samoset and Tisquantum. Bradford said God surely moved in a boundless way. I nodded in agreement. They were desperately worried, however, about their ability to survive another winter without more food or better shelter. I told them that two days' sailing north would bring them to a fishing settlement at Damariscove. It was important for them to realize that they were not the only English on this side of the Atlantic, with more people on the way. They were concerned about the poor relations they had with the local Indians, which Samoset and Tisquantum were helping to resolve. It was clear, however, that Epenow was not to be trusted and that he and his people should be given a wide berth.

I was pressed to stay, as Tisquantum and Samoset were expected to return at any time with their healing skills. An extended visit gave me an opportunity both to gain strength and to find out as much as I could about New Plimoth, so I could provide a full report to Sir F. and P. Allerton accompanied me on a walk around the settlement. He described the plans for building the village, which would be surrounded by a stockade. Houses continued to be built, but progress was understandably slow. A spring thaw had enabled them to start planting early, and he showed me the few plots of vegetables, surrounded by sturdy fencing. Some were already harvested, but the yield wasn't nearly enough. I was advised to rest as much as possible,

but I did make sure to talk with as many people as I could. There was a clear division between the Separatists from Leiden and the Strangers, those who had chosen to emigrate for economic reasons.

Three days later Tisquantum and Samoset returned, as pleased to see me again as I was them. Samoset provided ointment for my wound, and they both shook their heads at what I had been put through. They showed no surprise, however. Tisquantum said he was working hard to convince Massasoit to support the settlers while Epenow had expressed a counter point of view. They would have come sooner, but Tisquantum had been caught up in a disagreement with Epenow at Massasoit's village, a long day's walk south. Samoset was passing through while Tisquantum was staying to help the settlers. We parted with the hope of meeting again.

Very early the following morning I said my farewells to Bradford and Allerton and, with my two crewmates, sailed from New Plymouth, heading northeast for Beauport on Cape Ann, where we stayed the night. We returned to Piscataqua the next day.

## — CHAPTER 4 —

### **Journal entry—*June 1621***

When I arrived back at Pannaway, I gave David a full account of my trip. He treated my wound and made me rest. He had a shelter built for me with a sailcloth roof and open sides on a clifftop looking East over the sea towards the Smith Isles. The sea breezes kept me cool and reduced the insect menace. David wanted to be back in England by September and was determined to complete construction by the end of July. The fort's roof and walls looked to be largely finished but it was clear that much internal work was still needed. He wanted to build additional housing and storage in a compound close to where he had put up flakes for drying fish. The Smith Isles had been used as a base for extensive fishing and *Jonathan* had been busy over the spring catching cod. The flakes had been used well. David expected to have a full cargo of dried fish to take home and provide a good return to his sponsors, including Sir F., so work proceeded at a brisk pace.

Once deemed sufficiently recovered, and at my insistence, I was given low skilled but increasingly heavy laboring jobs to do, like cutting and carrying logs and digging further foundations, and I regained my strength quickly. By the end of July, David was satisfied with our progress. Not knowing how long he would be away, he was careful to board up the fort, build protective walls and strengthen the roofs of all the buildings so that gales, snowstorms, and wild

animals would not do too much damage in his absence. He arranged with the local Indians to keep an eye on it all. We sailed for England on 5 August 1621 and made quick time back to Plymouth arriving Monday, 10 September.

### **Journal entry—*September 1621***

On the way back, David and I discussed our respective plans. He said that his London backers, five merchant adventurers, would be anxious for him to gather settlers and return to Pannaway as soon as possible. They were looking for substantial and continuing profits. David, therefore, was keen to establish the trading relationship with Askuwhteau. He was concerned about finding the right people and establishing a permanent home for himself, Amyse, and their son. He needed to confirm the precise boundaries of the land grant he was receiving from Sir Ferdinando. He wondered whether he should have settled on a site further up the Piscataqua River to make trading with the Indians simpler. He recognized that his objectives were different from those of his sponsors; he wanted a home while they wanted a trading post. He admitted that he would have some serious persuading to do to make sure that his plans were not upset.

Back in Plymouth, I walked home in some anticipatory trepidation with a bag of my belongings from the boat and knocked on the door. There was no one home so I let myself in. The house was much as I had left it last December. Clean and full of memories. I moved slowly through the rooms, picking up objects, running my hands over familiar furniture, the polished kitchen table, the chairs we sat in by the fire. Upstairs, I sat on our bed and was overwhelmed with the memory of the dying Aby. This was a test. Remembering David Thomson's wise words, I made a conscious effort to free her spirit from my attempts to hold on to her. As I left the bedroom I heard the front door open and the cheerful voice of Annie, persuading James to pick his feet up and hurry along before she closed the door on him. A sharp

jolt of excitement coursed through me. The three of us faced each other in the kitchen. Little James ran to hide himself behind her. With a look of shock on her face, Annie managed a strangled “Hello, Isaac.” I couldn’t speak. My mouth opened but no words came out. I should have gone to her, embraced and kissed her. She waited. I did nothing, frozen. Annie came to me, put her hands on my shoulders, shook them gently, looked up at me, holding my gaze, and said “Hello Isaac, my dear friend.” I lifted my hands to her face, brushed her hair from her face and bent down and kissed her. “Hello, Annie.”

She smiled and sat down, lifting James onto her lap. Quietly she said, “Isaac, James has missed you terribly this year. It has been such a long time, too long. James is growing into a fine boy. He is a credit to you but he needs his father.”

Looking at them both I realized how much I had missed them and what they meant to me.

“So, Isaac, what is your will?”

“Before anything I must report to Sir Ferdinando, then to the Reverend White in Dorchester.”

“When?”

“I should go to the Fort now and will be back as soon as possible. Then we can discuss when I should go to Dorchester.”

Annie got to her feet, handed my son to me and said she would find something for me to eat. I sat down with James in my arms. I hugged him to me. Thumb in mouth he sat staring at me in wide eyed wonder. I gently kissed his forehead. He reached up to tug at my beard. Annie brought back a pie and a pot of ale, and as we ate I asked her to tell me all that had happened with her and James while I was away. Annie described it all well and I wished I had been there with them. After which she pushed me out the door to go to my meeting at the Fort.

Sir F. was away. His adjutant, Captain Turner, was pleased to see me and I gave him an account of my trip. He told me to send the written report to him for onward dispatch to Sir F. He then told me what had been happening in my absence.

“The Virginia Company has been fighting Sir Ferdinando in the Privy Council to overturn the charter of the Council for New England, and unfortunately, Sir Ferdinando has been totally preoccupied with his duties as Governor of Plymouth Fort, so is unable to spend the time he needs to in London.”

“What about La Rochelle?”

“The French King has become aggressive with respect to the Huguenots in places like La Rochelle. The Rochelais are fighting back on the high seas, as much as on land. French merchant ships are being taken by Huguenot privateers and being brought into Plymouth, followed by the French navy. It is all fraught. Clearly King James’ attempt at international peace and reconciliation has failed and years of neglect have weakened England’s defenses.”

It was evident that my New England interests had become low priority. I needed to wait for a more propitious time to talk with Sir F. I went to meet with Ebenezer Scroud, who said that the financial arrangements I had made to support Annie Potts had continued, thanks to her precise and prompt accounting, to be most satisfactory. He assured me my investments had done well and I was in good financial shape.

When I returned home, Annie was in the kitchen and James was resting. She asked me about New England and I provided her with a quick summary.

“What, no injuries? You surprise me.”

“Well, one or two but all healed.”

She demanded to know more. It was the Annie I remembered from so many years ago, stripping me down to attend some wound or other. In spite of my protestations she had me remove my shirt and her fingers traced the scar across the top of my chest, now just a thin purple line. Her touch made me draw breath. She looked at me with a slight frown.

“Does it hurt?”

I smiled. “No. quite the opposite.”

She leant back, told me to put my shirt on, and moving away asked

me when I planned to go to Dorchester. My puzzlement was obvious.

“Mr. Stanfield, we have much to talk about and bridges to cross. I welcome you back with a full heart. You have been away and I have no idea if and when you will disappear. We must learn to be with each other again. Now, I suggest you go to Dorchester and organize your life so that James and I can be comfortable and regain our trust in you.”

We spent the rest of the day with her getting me to talk about everything that had happened to me since leaving for New England. No summaries, she wanted everything, to live through the experiences I described, but also to bring me back to her and James. That night, we went to our separate beds and the next morning I left to ride to Dorchester.

I rode Maddie out of Plymouth making for Exeter, the early morning already warm with a late summer glow. My mood lightened as I skirted Dartmoor, the moors stretching away into the distance, shades of green, brown, and the grey of rocky outcrops all fading into the distance. I needed time to get my riding muscles back in shape. By the time we rode into Exeter I was sore. I went to the White Hart and a room was available. After a leisurely meal and a tankard or two of good English ale, sorely missed, I went to my bed. I slept well for a few hours then wide awake I lay on my back trying to sort out the maelstrom in my head. My pride had been hurt but I realized that Annie had been right. Once I understood that, I was able to relax and daydream about Annie and what our future might be.

After a small breakfast, Maddie and I headed out. It took several days for us to make the journey to Dorchester. My body complained if I was too long in the saddle. The clean country air, the views of my England, the friendly inns all worked their magic, and by the time I reached the Sun Inn in Lower Burton, I was feeling much fitter. I resolved to write to Annie on a regular basis whenever I was away from her. Jeremiah Gosling, mine host at the Sun greeted me like a long absent son of the house, putting me up in my old room. It was early and I wasn't prepared to announce my arrival in Dorchester till



the morrow, so Jeremiah and I spent a companionable evening, between his duties, covering the year or so I had been away. I wrote a quick note to Annie telling her I was in Dorchester, apologizing for my abrupt leaving and saying I was thinking about her and James.

Next morning, Friday, I walked into Dorchester, passing the house and shop where Aby had lived with her father. It had changed. The new owner had rebuilt the yard and made extensions to the house. Seeing it helped me deal with all that had happened. I went to the rectory. Mrs. White opened the door. I doffed my hat and still she didn't recognize me. I greeted her and she whispered, "Oh Isaac! You've come back." She enveloped me in her arms and with me holding her as tightly we stood at the door until P. called out, asking who was at the door. I was released and led into the kitchen where P. was having his breakfast. He too took a moment to recognize me. Then with a cry, "Isaac!", he got to his feet and embraced me.

"Sit, sit. Have you had breakfast? We have missed you dreadfully. How have you been keeping? You have changed. You look older, your suffering shows."

With all these words and questions I sat, unable to speak. I felt like a little boy again, coming home. It was an emotional moment. Mrs. White told her husband to slow down.

"Give the boy room to breathe."

P. took me to his study and promised his wife that I would be freed from his interrogation later for her to ask me what she wanted to know. He shut the door, told me to sit and had me describe in detail all I had experienced. He was concerned about the loss of life and the difficulties the New England settlers had in their efforts to survive. He said that their commitment to settle as a community of families bode well and vindicated his opinion about long term sustainability. But, that alone was not sufficient. He was working with a group of local businessmen and landowners to establish an organization to support further settlement in New England. He saw the importance of having a collective faith to bind the settlers, but he was concerned about that faith becoming an isolationist barrier.

We had spent several hours in our discussions and a sharp rap on the study door reminded us of that. I was invited to stay for lunch which I was happy to accept. The conversation over lunch was a much more intimate affair. I was questioned about my feelings since my loss of Aby. They had been deeply saddened when she died but it had been a year ago. I was asked about James and Annie. I gave an enthusiastic description of how James was growing into a fine young boy. I said I believed Annie and I would become close but Annie would determine that. They asked what I intended while in Dorchester. I said that I wanted to learn more about P.'s plans for building his support group—what he was beginning to call his Dorchester Company. And I wanted to spend time with Will Whiteway to rekindle that deep friendship.

I returned to the Sun and took Maddie out for a ride through the countryside I loved. On the way back we climbed Eggardon Hill. It was a mellow evening, a time and place I remembered from my earliest youth. I had had many adventures here and needed that reminder. Lying on my back, head in hands, I reveled in the sounds of the birds, the lowing of cattle, the wind in the trees, the rustling of little creatures in the gorse, the gathering of swallows as they prepared to leave for the winter. What were my plans? I wanted to get back to Plymouth to Annie and James. I needed to regain her trust but I had to meet with Sir F. I wanted to meet up with David Tremaine again. He would still be working for Sir F., so that's how I would find him. On my return to the Sun, I sent a note to Sir F., saying I was sorry to have missed him but was in Dorchester to meet with Reverend White. At Captain Turner's suggestion, I was writing a full report of my voyage to New England which I would send to him shortly. I asked him to advise me when and where he would be free to spend time to discuss the report, and matters pertaining. Finally, I begged his indulgence to advise me where I might make contact with David Tremaine. I sent a note to Will saying I was staying at the Sun and would like to see him. An early night. I slept well. Next morning, a note from Will saying 'come immediately'.

Will and Elenor welcomed me with open arms. We dealt with the sadness of Aby's passing. They were pleased to tell me of the birth of their daughter Mary, in June. While Elenor was with us we talked about happenings locally. They both agreed that P. had certainly worked wonders in revitalizing Dorchester after the fire that nearly decimated the town eight years ago. There was a sense of purpose, a determination to prosper, to complete the rebuilding of a new Dorchester, not just the replacing the buildings destroyed or damaged in the fire, but building the commitment to community engagement, support for the less fortunate, making people more godly, although there were still the usual backsliders and ne'er-do-wells. Will said that with the changes wrought, P. felt he was in a better position to begin the process of promoting the opportunities for settlement in New England.

The days went quickly. I wrote my report for Sir F. and spent much time with P. He asked me to meet with an increasing number of merchants and gentry whom he wanted to support New England settlements in some way. Having made three separate trips there, my experience was much sought after. We met in P.'s study, or in larger groups in people's houses or in private dining rooms of inns in the area. Everyone wanted to understand the opportunities and risks of establishing settlements and making them self-sufficient. They were aware of the problems of the Virginia Company and the fact that it was on the verge of financial insolvency. They wanted to know what would be the differences in settlements in New England, which would mitigate the problems in Virginia. Did I know anything about the Somers Isles Company? Might the settlement in Bermuda be a better example to follow? I couldn't help them there. Sir Ferdinando had expressed interest in finding out more, some time ago. But, I had heard nothing. They were fascinated to learn first-hand about my visit to New Plimouth, which represented the ideal plantation proposed by P., being a complete community with families, and leadership bound by a shared religious belief and practice. They asked me about the Indians. The fact that I had been taken

captive, twice, concerned them. However light I made of my experiences, I had in the end to be truthful about the good and the bad. The letters I wrote to Annie recounting my activities became a salve. The more I thought about and communicated with her, the barrier became less and less important. I received an occasional note back from Annie and longed to return to Plymouth.

Captain Turner wrote and told me that Sir F. asked him to thank me for the New England report and gave me the startling news that Sir F. was due to be married in a few weeks to Mary Achims of Hall Farm, Pelynt, Cornwall. He would be away in Cornwall until that happy event and then would be returning to London to defend the charter of his Council for New England. It was suggested that I wait till then to seek an appointment with him in London. It was time I returned to Plymouth. I spent a happy evening with the Whiteways. The following morning, I said my farewells and with the promise I would return after Christmas.

### **Journal entry**—*October – December 1621*

Back home at 15 Whimple St. Annie and I settled into a platonic friendship. I had been away three weeks. Mindful of my need to rebuild my relationships with both Annie and James I trod carefully, waiting for cues from Annie, unnatural for both of us. Annie was the mistress of the house. I accepted the situation and wrapped myself up in the warmth of the family group—James and I spent much time together. We played games, told stories to each other, James, necessarily brief and incomprehensible, but amusing to both of us, walked to the Hoe and explored. With Annie, we rode frequently, sometimes staying overnight at a not too distant inn.

When she and I were alone in the evenings we talked about our days' activities. Annie was keen to know about my work. I spent many hours engrossed in my trading activities, working with my investment partners and Mr. Scroud, learning the intricacies of the

business. Occasionally, I would sail with Henri Giradeau on a trip to France. His family and business were now well settled in Plymouth after fleeing from La Rochelle. I was never away for more than a week. Annie would see me off with a hug and a kiss on the cheek and would welcome me back in like manner. She seemed comfortable in the relationship but every now and then I caught her looking at me with an intensity that she quickly hid. I too spent time, when she was pre-occupied with James, cooking, or her needlework, absorbed in her presence, happy just to gaze at her, white mop cap covering her hair done up in a bun with wisps framing her face. Whatever plan Annie was working to, it was definitely having an effect. Despite the unnatural circumstances, we had become comfortable with each other's presence—at least I had. But I wondered what was going on inside her head. We celebrated James' second birthday on 6 December.

In mid-December, I received a note from Captain Turner saying that Sir F. required my presence in Clerkenwell. I would be away for several weeks. With the hope that we would spend Christmas together, Annie saw me off with a hug and a kiss on the cheek.

## — CHAPTER 5 —

### **Journal entry—***December 1621*

I proceeded to the Clerkenwell residence and was welcomed by the staff in Sir F.'s absence. A room was ready for me, but I preferred to stay at the nearby Old Mitre Inn in Ely Place. At my request, Sir F.'s steward undertook to send a message to David Tremaine, and a couple of days later he appeared. It was a grand reunion. He had been working undercover to provide information to Sir F. about the actions of the parties in opposition to the Council for New England. He had been keeping an eye on Thomas Weston, the merchant adventurer who had been such a problem for the Separatists before they sailed from Plymouth in September last year. David had gone to Rotherhithe to meet Captain Jones of the *Mayflower* on his sorry return to England. Jones had told a woeful story of cold, disease, and malnutrition.

After the royal assent of the charter of the Council for New England, Sir F. was having great difficulty in raising the necessary money from the original charter members of the Council to support settlement. The question of fishing by others in New England waters had become a serious matter, so he decided to place a tax on fishing there. Now the opposition came from West Country towns whose fishermen wanted free access to their New England fishing grounds. David had established friendly relations with many of the

towns' legal representatives. He knew the taverns close to the Inns of Court where the lawyers tended to congregate. An evening of drinking and dining loosened tongues sufficiently for him to gather useful information to report back to Sir F. Matters were becoming fraught. So much so that David had urged Sir F. to come to London to deal with the matter directly. However, Sir F. had not yet arrived.

Thomas Weston was an issue. When the *Mayflower* returned from New Plimouth, Weston had expected it to be filled with fish, timber, sassafras, pelts, and other goods that would have provided the ample return he had promised his fellow adventurers. The half empty *Mayflower* on its arrival back at Rotherhithe was both a financial blow and a major blemish to his reputation among the commercial interests in London. David had kept in touch with him, but every now and then he had to cope with a drunk Weston bemoaning his fate and the laziness of the settlers he insisted he had done so much to support. He said that Weston expected to establish a new settlement in 1622 with a body of fit young men who would not only be able to live in adverse conditions but to flourish in them.

A note came from Sir F. saying he had been delayed and wouldn't be in London until after Christmas. Aggravating, as I could have spent Christmas with Annie and James. I wrote a letter to Annie apologizing for my further delay. David then took me in hand, and we proceeded to celebrate Christmas in London.

### **Journal entry—January 1622**

By the end of Twelfth Night we were exhausted, hoarse of voice, and in a seemingly permanent state of inebriation. David and I recovered after several days of abstinence. Which was as well, because we were summoned to meet Sir F. at his Clerkenwell residence on Monday, 10 January 1622.

Sir F. wanted to discuss my recent report on the trip I had made with David Thomson. He had many questions. Sir F. said it was

absolutely imperative to establish additional settlements as quickly as possible. There needed to be a flow of settlers building permanent homes and sending back the merchandise to repay investors and to demonstrate to others the opportunities for investment. While he didn't hold out much hope for Weston, he was pleased with Thomson and sure that he would establish a successful settlement at Piscataqua. There were two other men that he wanted to talk to us about: a lawyer who was an old acquaintance of his, Thomas Morton, and a sea captain, Christopher Levett. Both men had expressed their desire to pursue the possibilities of settlements in New England. Thomas Morton was a Devon man, trained as a lawyer in London. It was clear from Sir F.'s expression that he had mixed feelings about him, and David pressed him.

"Morton is one of the most amusing men I have ever met," Sir F. said. "He scorns the authority he doesn't agree with. Life to him is a game, and he attracts people who are similarly inclined, but he has a serious side. He is angered by society's indifference to the homeless, the destitute. He believes the Separatist movement is joyless and a serious threat to the quality of life as he sees it. He made a name for himself as a lawyer representing the interests of the dispossessed, mainly in the towns of Devon, including Plymouth. It was there that I first met him, in court persuasively arguing the case for a family ruined by a cruel and unbending landlord. A case that he won through mockery as much as oratory."

Sir F. continued.

"Morton intends to sail to New England as soon as he can find passage. He wants to survey the land and the opportunity. If he is successful, he plans to return to England and gather a group of young men, people who welcome adventure and are ambitious to escape the sordid life they live in England, as indentured servants, to work to become free and prosperous land owners in this new world, as he puts it."

David Tremaine had known Captain Christopher Levett in the navy and said he was an attractive leader but not a good one. He was



not a skilled tactician as he always looked for short-term results and did not concern himself with seeking long-term advantage. If something was out of sight, he quickly forgot about it.

“Not a strong endorsement for someone we want to establish a successful, permanent settlement,” I said.

Sir F. replied that Levett, a Yorkshireman, had plans to take a large group of men with him from around York who were keen to establish a life in New England. He claimed to have the interest, the people, and the necessary financial support. He had joined the Council as a member. As a result, Sir F. was prepared to support him as well, including the provision of a land grant.

Sir F. moved to the matter of most concern to him. He said that there was so much interest in New England settlements that he felt it essential to establish a local authority to ensure lawful government of the people, land, and commerce. In order to effect that governance, he was planning to send his son Robert over as Governor of New England with all authority in 1623. Robert Gorges had been an officer in the Venetian army and had, according to Sir F., served with distinction. Sir F. was most concerned that the lawlessness of the fishing settlements in Newfoundland should not be allowed to recur in New England. By then, David Thomson, Thomas Weston, Thomas Morton, and possibly Captain Levett would have begun their own settlements, adding to the one in New Plimouth. What was more, he said, it's possible that Reverend John White is planning one in 1623, supported by a group of West Country gentry and merchants out of Dorchester. He asked me if that was true.

“You are right, sir. Reverend White is keen to support colonization. He feels the Separatists are in serious difficulties and need his financial support. He is concerned that there are fishing communities over there who do not have access to religious instruction. He wants more settlements populated by whole communities.”

Sir F. nodded. “Isaac, I want you to accompany Robert when he sails to New England next year. He will need your experience and steady hand. You need to go to Wraxall to help him establish a better

understanding of the challenges he will face as governor.”

He turned to David Tremaine.

“David, I will eventually need you here in London. I expect to be here for the rest of this year. However, you should go down to Plymouth to continue to gather information for me. But before then the tasks I have for you both are to spend time with Weston and Morton. I need you to get a much clearer idea of their plans and timetables.”

With that, he dismissed us both. David and I spent a happy evening together plotting how we should approach Weston, Morton, and Levett before we went our separate ways. It seemed logical that I should tackle Weston while David spend time with his old acquaintance, Captain Levett, after which we could both concentrate on Morton. It seemed he was a man of many parts. I pushed the prospect of accompanying Robert to New England firmly to the back of my mind.

Back at the Old Mitre, I received a letter from Annie. Full of news of James and how he was becoming a fine, sturdy boy—lively, curious, and on the verge of talking real words. No reproaches, no wanting to know when I was returning. In fact, not a word about herself.

I had some difficulty tracking down Thomas Weston. Eventually I found him in Rotherhithe, where he had chartered the *Sparrow* to take his people to New Plimouth. Arguments with his fellow investors were delaying the voyage. They appeared to have different opinions about the objectives set for the settlement. For the most part, they were the same people who supported the *Mayflower* expedition and, therefore, were hesitant to believe him. Weston was nervous about his standing with the Separatists. He had abandoned them at the difficult start of their move to New England in September 1620. He had sent them letters promising his support and commitment to their settlement. However, it was clear, at least to me, that he had other ideas.

Interestingly enough, among the people I met associated with Weston was a Devon man named Roger Conant. He was a member

of the Salter's Guild and had heard a speech given by Captain John Smith at the Salter's Hall some years previously. Captain Smith had been waxing most poetical over the opportunities for settlement in New England. A seed had been planted. Being a Devon man, Conant was aware of Sir F.'s activities in New England. More recently, Conant had heard a similar speech from Weston. He and his wife Sarah had recently lost their baby daughter. That, and their unhappiness with the economic situation in England, had caused them to focus on the opportunities for emigration. Weston and Conant were members of the same congregation of St. Anne's in Blackfriars, so the two had plenty of opportunity to converse. I was surprised by the relationship they developed as I found Conant to be a different person from those with whom Weston surrounded himself. He was quiet, sober, and gentle of spirit—a godly Anglican. I thought that he would get on well with P. I suggested to Conant that he might want to contact P. to find out what P. had planned for New England. I thought it a much better alternative for Conant and his wife than throwing their lot in with Weston.

A major surprise was the plan of Thomas Morton. He had decided to join the Weston expedition to do his own investigation. David Tremaine and I met with him back in London, in the Inns of Court, where he had rooms. I expressed surprise, given my observations of the rabble that Weston had gathered. He said he was merely taking advantage of the ride but would be keeping himself distant from Weston and, for that matter, the Separatists.

We reported our meetings to Sir F.

“Worrying, especially about Weston, but we have to take whoever we can. The danger they will find themselves in will surely force them to work together.”

Sir F. thanked us for our reports and dismissed us to go our separate ways: David to Plymouth to work with his eldest son, John Gorges who was handling his father's affairs while Sir F. was in London, and me to Dorchester to learn more about P.'s plans.

## — CHAPTER 6 —

### **Journal entry—*February 1622***

Travelling from London in early February, I was well on the way to Dorchester when suddenly I was accosted. I had spent a pleasant evening and night at the George in Salisbury and then continued my journey on the Exeter road. The weather had turned from fresh and spring-like on the previous day to something altogether colder. I was well bundled up, and Maddie and I made slow but steady progress. We had traversed a ridge and dropped down into a thickly wooded valley near Woodyates when two men jumped from behind trees in front of us. Maddie took exception and reared. One of the men grabbed the bridle with one hand and levelled a pistol at me with the other. The second man moved to my left and tried to drag me off. I kicked Maddie hard, and she started forward. But the man holding her bridle was strong and experienced. He dragged her head round and down. I fell out of my saddle and tumbled to the ground. Maddie was loosened, and the second man took hold of her. My sword was entangled in my cape. The pistol was at my head.

“Easy now, sir. I have you. Calm down, slowly remove your sword. Thank you. Now move to that tree.”

I was tied securely. I heard Maddie moving away. A blow to my head and I was no longer aware. I awoke with a headache and a small boy poking at me.

“Mister. You alive?”

I looked down at him. Dirty but beguiling face, two front teeth missing, and a widening grin of relief that I was conscious. Standing behind him was a girl, even smaller, too like him to be other than his sister, with a thumb in her mouth peering at me with huge cornflower blue eyes under a thicket of golden curls framing her grubby face.

“Have you got a knife?” I asked the lad.

“No, sir.”

“Well, if you can get your hand under my cape, between me and the tree you should find a dirk.”

He removed it, cut me free, and gave me their names, Davey and Beth. They lived with their mother a short way down the road on a farm. They had been out gathering nettles. Beth lifted a basket to prove their success. My head aching, I tried to gather my wits. As I studied the ground, Davey asked what I was doing. I told him I was looking for signs that could tell me how long I had been tied up as well as where Maddie had gone.

“A short time, and your horse has been taken.”

“How do you know?”

“Because we were hiding over there and saw the whole thing.”

I laughed.

“Do you know who they were?”

“Yes.”

“Are you going to tell me?”

Davey grinned mischievously.

“I’ll make it worth your while.”

A slight amount of negotiating for form’s sake ensued. We agreed on a price, and Davey gave me the information I was after. They were local footpads—clever and so far easily avoiding the authorities. It seemed as long as they stayed out of the towns that had law officers and did no serious bodily damage they were treated as a minor nuisance. At least that is what I gathered from Davey’s chattering. While we talked I was led down the road and then up a cart path to a small farmhouse, clean, with chickens in the yard, a pigsty, and

some pregnant ewes in an enclosure.

The childrens' mother appeared at the door. Calm, self-possessed, probably about my age, full body, and a cap hiding most of the same curly hair as her daughter's with deep blue eyes in an attractive open face. Her name, she said, was Kate Hardy. I introduced myself, and the children told her of my predicament. She checked my head, finding some skin broken and a little blood but nothing serious. She was a strong woman who did not fuss. She said that the two men, Septimus Boyle and Arthur Lessen, would want to rid themselves of my belongings as quickly as possible, including Maddie. They worked with an even more disreputable character who bought stolen property and resold it up the road towards London. There was a pub, the Plough, a couple of miles north of here and off the beaten track, which they used as a base and to exchange purloined property for cash. The robbers had overlooked my purse, hidden under my cape. I was able to offer a fair price for the loan of Kate's only horse, with the promise to return it the following day. I was given directions and set off, bareback, at a fast pace for the Plough.

The pub was small and barely recognizable as such. But it had a sign and a stable yard behind. I rode into the yard and dismounted. An old ostler with a peg leg came to take my horse.

"I'm looking for Septimus."

"He's in the pub."

I nodded.

"Do you have a stall for my horse?"

I followed him as he led the horse into the stable. As I hoped, Maddie was in a stall and whickered to see me. She still had my saddle bags on her, and I saw my sword stuck behind one of them. The ostler looked at me curiously.

"This horse seems to know you."

"Aye. We are old friends."

"She seems to know you a sight better than she does Septimus."

I asked the ostler if he was a friend of Septimus. No, he wasn't. They had got into a fight over some name calling. He asked me if I

was another victim of Septimus. I smiled ruefully.

“Why don’t you just take your possessions and leave?” the man suggested.

On another day, I might have, but I felt aggrieved. I checked the saddlebags. A money sack was missing. I decided to confront my robbers. No doubt they would have friends in the pub, but they needed to be taught a lesson. So I grabbed my sword, sheathed it, dropped a few coins into the ostler’s hand, and walked through the yard to the pub.

Middle of the day, but still not many people were about. I saw my two robbers at a table in a dark corner. They had drinks in front of them and a bag, my money sack. They were counting the coins into two piles. Engrossed, they didn’t notice me. I went to the bar, bought an ale, and sauntered over to the table. They looked up as I approached. They were slow to recognize me but quick to react once they did. Septimus raised his pistol, but I had drawn my sword and it was at his throat. He put the pistol on the table. I told them to move round the table and sit so their backs were to the room. I sat facing them and the room. No one else in the pub seemed too interested. I told them to keep their hands on the table, and I swept the piles of coins out of reach. I checked the pistol. It wasn’t loaded, and part of the flintlock was missing. It was little more than a toy. Septimus grinned while Arthur scratched his chin. I suggested they take a drink, which they did. I bagged the money, raised my tankard to them, and left the pub.

I rode Maddie back to the farm, leading the borrowed horse. So much for teaching the footpads a lesson. A big smile and a toy pistol had leached the aggression out of me. Davey and Beth ran to greet me as I walked up the cart path. Kate offered me lunch, a newly baked loaf and local cheese, which I enjoyed with the whole family. It seemed her husband had died in a farming accident a year earlier. A farmer’s daughter herself, Kate had taken on her husband’s tenancy, retaining the two workers he had hired. She told me that Davey, six years old, was already useful around the farm and idolized by his

sister, who followed him everywhere. Kate and I sat across from each other, the children playing under the table in cheerful and noisy fashion. Her elbows on the table, fists under her chin, she looked at me with a disconcertingly level gaze.

“Now tell me, Mr. Stanfield, traveler from London. Who are you?”

I told her the basics. Born in Dorchester, went to sea as a lad, moved to Plymouth and became a trader. Further probing questions uncovered enough to give some satisfaction. Much later, I left my new friends and rode to the Woodyates Inn. The day was spent, and Maddie and I had travelled only twelve miles from Salisbury.

Next day, a little warmer but cloudy, we made good progress, and the thirty miles to Dorchester took us five hours. Maddie was in her stall at the Sun by early afternoon. I sent a message to P. saying I had returned and would welcome an opportunity to meet with him. The messenger returned with a note telling me to come to the rectory at 10:00 the following morning.

When I arrived for my appointment, I found Richard Bushrode, *Rosie's* co-owner, in attendance. We had met on a number of occasions over the years. I felt he still saw me as a disheveled ship's boy, but he rose when I entered P's study and shook my hand warmly. Perhaps I was wrong. P. said that another gentleman would be joining us a little later, Sir Walter Erle. I was startled. Sir Walter was a significant person in Dorset—High Sheriff, Member of Parliament, and wealthy landowner. He had been a supporter of the Virginia Company. Seeing the look on my face, P. laughed.

“Isaac, you are too close to all the happenings around and about New England. Step back, lift your eyes. It has become a fascination and talking point throughout the land. Your conversations with my many colleagues last November helped stoke the fires. Your friend Sir Ferdinando needs to loosen the constraints to investment there. He needs more support than he can obtain from the members of his New England Council. For some years, we have been building a West Country group of investors and potential settlers to promote



our interests, and we need Sir Ferdinando to accept our involvement and take advantage of the opportunities.”

I was surprised both at how successful P. appeared to have been and how long he had been involved without my knowing. I had assumed that he had been solely focused on Dorchester. Sir F. would be heartened to hear of P.’s work on New England settlement. Maybe he already knew. But I worried about the level of anticipation now being shown. Bushrode was watching me closely as P. extolled his plans. He saw my concern and asked what troubled me. I said that much was happening in New England but it was still early days. I said I should give them an account of my most recent trip there, as well as what I had learnt in London since I was last in Dorchester. P. suggested I wait until Sir Walter arrived. So we turned to other matters.

Bushrode said that he had wanted to meet with me for another reason. He was aware of my interest in trading and, though on a scale smaller than his own, my success in it. Sir F. had given me good marks, and I had a growing reputation in Plymouth. His praise embarrassed but gratified me. Bushrode said he was putting together a business venture that involved trading with Spain, Malaga specifically. France was becoming too much of a problem. He was looking for a junior partner. Might I be interested?

“Well, sir. It sounds intriguing but depends on the timing, my role, and the level of investment.”

“Good answer. I am aware that you expect to be heavily engaged next year with Sir Ferdinando on New England matters. I have two trips planned this year between July and September, using Captain Brown and the *Sweet Rose*. With respect to the first trip, I have a full cargo set for the journey to Malaga but a light load so far organized for the return. I would like you to accompany that trip and work your contacts at the monastery where you rescued the Indians to establish additional trading opportunities—if not for the return voyage, then for the subsequent trip.”

P. left us early on to return with Sir Walter, whom I had seen

from afar but never met. Slightly stooped, pointed beard turning grey, hooded eyes with large bushy eyebrows. He greeted me courteously. P. asked me to narrate my recent voyage to New England, which I did. Many keen questions were posed, which I answered satisfactorily. I was then asked about my trip to London. I emphasized the exploratory nature and the ill-preparedness of the expeditions underway. Sir Walter observed that with the increasing activity in New England, it was important for us to establish our own settlements with land patents awarded by the Council. We talked for several hours. Lunch was provided as we continued to debate the opportunities. My role was to answer questions and comment on various proposals, but Bushrode and Sir Walter drove the conversation. They asked me to return to London and meet with Sir F. to convey to him the importance of allowing the Dorchester Group, of some 100 or more leading citizens of Dorset and Devon, to gain access to the land under the Council's control. With the money raised from its membership, the Dorchester Group planned to build a vessel to carry new settlers as well as to service existing settlements, including New Plymouth. Its intention was to establish a settlement at Cape Ann. There was a good harbor, Beauport, which would be an ideal place for fishing and the drying and salting of fish for shipment back to England. The meeting ended with me agreeing to go back to London—but only after I dealt with a personal matter in Plymouth.

The next day, Maddie and I left early to ride home. The weather had changed for the worse. Winter weather, snow and ice, cold winds from the east. We struggled to make good progress, and it was three days before we got to Plymouth. Arriving late in the afternoon, I went directly to Whimble Street. Door locked, no one at home. The hidden front door key was still in its place, so I let myself in.

Very quiet, almost shrouded, clean, but not been lived in for a while. The front door, which was directly on the street, opened into a hallway with stairs to the first floor. To the right of the stairs, a door led to a large kitchen with an enormous open fire hearth—no fire in the kitchen hearth, no food out, everything put away, a passage to

the left past the chimney to a living room, the hearth open between the two rooms. In the living room, a large window looked out onto a modest, walled garden. Upstairs, a small hall with a sewing room to the left, and to the right a door to the bedrooms. There was a connecting door between the first bedroom and a second, larger bedroom with a fireplace. Where were Annie and James? I locked up and hurried to the Minerva Inn. I sought the landlord Alfred Potts in the bar room to ask after his niece. Alfred greeted me with less than his normal enthusiasm.

“Isaac, good to see you. How have you been?”

“Alfred, likewise you. Sorry to be so abrupt, but I am seeking news of Annie and my son.”

Alfred took me by the arm and led me to a table away from a crowd of his patrons. We sat down, and a couple of tankards appeared as if by magic.

“Isaac, Annie is not here. As far as I know she has James with her. I do not see her much since she no longer works here at the Minerva, and when I do she seems changed, no longer the carefree niece I once knew.”

My heart sank. I asked where she might have gone. Alfred didn’t know. I asked him who might. He thought for a while and then said that she was a regular attendee at St. Andrews, where she had become friendly with some Huguenot families. He shook his head.

“Isaac. If you pardon the liberty, you are a bloody fool.”

With that he left me, and I returned to the house. Now really worried and berating myself, I did not sleep well that night and on the following morning I walked to Henri Giradeau’s house. He was away, but his daughter Vivienne was there, now Mme. Marchand after marrying Pierre Marchand, a partner of her father’s, in 1619. We greeted each other with great affection, the old friends that we remained. After exchanging pleasantries, I explained that I had just returned from London and found that Annie and James were away. Might she know where they were?

“Why, yes. Annie and James are staying with friends in Cornwall.

They left a week ago, and I believe they are not due back any time soon.”

“How were they when you last saw them?”

“James is a fine young boy. Annie has become his mother. They are inseparable.”

“Inseparable?”

“Yes, Isaac. Annie and I have talked often about the difficult situation she is in. She has decided that she cannot rely on you to be a constant parent or even to re-appear to see your son again. She has, therefore, decided to take on that responsibility in the new life she is building.”

“Vivienne, I don’t understand. What are you telling me?”

She sighed, frowned, and leant back in her chair. After a long pause, she said, “Annie is being courted. He is the son of the family with whom Annie is staying in Cornwall. They are members of the congregation at St. Andrews and have a home in Truro. Annie is a friend of their daughter, a young widow with a child about James’ age. I believe it will be very difficult for both Annie and James if you decide to take the boy away from her.”

Vivienne blushed at the stark words she had spoken and apologized, but there was no way to explain the situation gently. She waited for me to respond, which took me a while. Finally I thanked Vivienne for her honesty and stood. Vivienne arose, tears in her eyes, and we embraced.

“My dear Isaac, I am sorry. I have only this advice to give you. You must decide what you want and what you must do to achieve it.”

Now what was I to do? I realized that seeking out Annie, a guest of people unknown to me and with her involved with their son, would be unseemly and upsetting for James. So with a heavy heart, I collected Maddie, and we rode out of Plymouth heading for London, making our way to the White Hart in Exeter for our first night and then on to the Angel Inn in Yeovil for our second. I don’t remember much of the journey until we stopped for a rest on the Blackwood Hills on the road from Yeovil to Salisbury. The weather had cleared,

and I could see for miles in every direction: the woods, fields, hamlets nestled into folds in the hills all dusted with snow, which sparkled in the sunlight. Looking at the view, I felt I was coming up for air. I let Maddie graze by a stream while I sat with the warm sun at my back. The sights, scents, sounds of nature at peace and a soft breeze calmed my spirits, and I began to think more clearly.

I thought back to our first meeting and Annie's obvious affection for me and remembered how steadfast she had been when everyone else presumed me dead. Seducing me and then her close friendship, advice, and support. How loyal and caring she had proved to be after Aby's death. A bright, sparkling joy to be with and so attractive, with her wide blue eyes, long auburn hair, and shapely body. The more I thought about her, the angrier I became with myself. How could I have taken her so for granted?

By early afternoon, without being fully aware of the journey, I found myself approaching Woodyates. I rode to the Hardy farm. The clatter of Maddie's hooves in the farmyard brought the children to the door. They squealed with delight and called for their mother. Kate appeared.

"You are back so soon, Mr. Stanfield. A pleasant surprise."

There was a hint of enquiry in her greeting.

"I am returning to London on an errand. It seems I was drawn here by some magical thread."

Kate bid me dismount and, taking Maddie's bridle, walked her to a comfortable stall across the yard. I followed her with Davey and Beth, the children telling me their news in a stream of chatter difficult to follow. Kate gave them Maddie duties.

"You have come from Dorchester?"

"No, Plymouth."

"You must be thirsty and hungry. Come, let me get you something."

We entered the house and went into the kitchen, where she moved to the pantry, returning with a side of ham, a farm loaf, cheese, and a jug of beer. We sat, and she asked me what I had been doing in the weeks since I was last there. Before long her probing questions and

intuition had me divulging more than I had intended.

“Tell me about your wife.”

And so started my account of Aby’s and my marriage. The day wore on. Kate made supper for the children, after which she put them, complaining but sleepy, to bed. She returned and continued.

“You have a son, James. I want to know more about the woman who cares for him.”

I started describing Annie. Slowly, everything was said. Kate looked disparagingly at me from under her curls.

“Stanfield. You are a fool. You and Annie love each other. She has become the mother of your child.”

I grimaced and said I had been informed that I had lost her to another man. Kate tossed her head and demanded I tell her exactly what I had been told. I did. She looked at me incredulously.

“You silly man. She went to stay with a friend, who happens to have a brother who fancies her. Even if she did respond to his attentions, you can hardly blame her. Where were you when it mattered? Why have you given up the chase? A woman needs to be appreciated and not taken for granted. She wants to know her man loves her. You have been tiptoeing around her, waiting for her to make your decisions.”

She went to the kitchen hearth and took down a large stock pot to make supper for us. I sat while she worked, and she told me about her life and the husband who had died. He had been much older than her, almost a father figure. His family had farmed this countryside for generations as tenant farmers. She had met him as a young teenager at a sheep fair in Salisbury ten years ago. Her parents, who farmed north of Salisbury, wouldn’t allow them to marry until Kate was 18, seven years ago. After he died, she had continued the farm. Farming was in her blood and she had her family all around her. I asked her about remarrying. She laughed. We talked more, and I began to unwind. I was reminded of the early days with Annie, her bedding me and then our becoming good friends. When I said as much to Kate, she shook her head in exasperation.

“Foolish boy. She has loved you from the moment you lay together. Think about all she has so willingly done for you.”

The conversation continued on through supper and late into the evening.

“You must stay the night. But seeing as I know you love another, I will not tempt you and have you share my bed.”

I was accommodated in the hay loft and settled down with the sound of Maddie contentedly munching below me. It sounded like someone walking along a gravel path. I lay on my back with my hands behind my head, staring at the beams of the stable. I had to laugh. What a woman. Then my mind turned back to Annie. I fell asleep realizing one thing was certain. I needed to win Annie back.

With that thought I knew no more till Kate’s cockerel announced the dawn. I washed myself at the pump in the yard to Davey and Beth’s amusement. By the time I had finished they were both as wet as me. Kate fed me a warming breakfast and bade me farewell with a peck on the cheek and hugs from the children. With many thanks and a wave I rode out of the yard. Maddie and I set off for Salisbury and on to London. I didn’t know when Kate and I would meet again, but I felt I had gained another remarkable friend.

Back in London, I wrote again to Annie, hoping she would read it on their return to 15 Whimple St., providing her with news of my activities and mentioning I had made a short trip to Plymouth in the hope of seeing them. I said how much I missed them and asked for news about what she and James were doing so I could feel a part of their lives, but I made no mention of what Viv had told me.

A frustrating week later, after waiting for Sir F. to find time for me, I met him at his home in Clerkenwell and told him of my gathering with P., Sir Walter, and Richard Bushrode. We had a long discussion about the import of that meeting. He said that it confirmed what he had been hearing elsewhere. He was determined to convince the Council to open up the land to others through grants, patents, or indentures. He said he should not nor would not put impediments in the way of a settlement and would write to Reverend

White as soon as the Council was in agreement. Sir F. confirmed that his son Robert was at Wraxall for the next few weeks, whither I should go. I was torn and dispirited, my mind on Annie and James, but I had been given my orders.



— CHAPTER 7 —

**Journal entry—*March 1622***

Maddie and I arrived at Wraxall Court on 1st March, the Gorges family's large manor house on high ground with long views over the valley. I rode up the long drive and around to the stables. Leaving Maddie I entered the back door which led directly to the kitchen. I was greeted as a prodigal son by Mary Applethwaite, the cook, who shrieked and hugged me before backing off to curtsy.

“What's this, Mary? None of that. I'm your Isaac.”

“Nay, sir. You're a gentleman now, and as I look at you time and toil has marked you.”

“Come, Mary, I insist.”

“Well, sir, I mean Isaac. It is so good to see you again. How long will you be here?”

“Not sure. I am here at the request of Sir Ferdinando to meet with Robert.”

At that moment Mr. Wellings, Sir Edward's steward, came in. With a happy grin he approached me with his hand outstretched and shook mine vigorously.

“Good to see you again, Mr. Stanfield. It's must be nearly four years.”

He took me to his office, and we sat over an ale while I told him why I was there and a little about what had passed with me. I

reminded Wellings that I needed to make myself known to the master of the house, Sir Edward Gorges.

“Of course. Sir Edward is in his study. I will go and announce your arrival.”

Wellings returned and said Sir Edward would be pleased to see me and that Robert was with him. I followed Wellings, who announced me at the door. Sir Edward came forward and offered me his hand. He gave me a keen look.

“You’ve had a time of it since last we met. I see it in your face. Welcome back to Wraxall. Ferdinando let me know that you might be down to spend some time with Robert.”

With that he turned to Sir F.’s youngest son, who was standing by the window. Robert came over and shook my hand. He did not look particularly happy. Remembering that Sir Edward had not thought highly of the younger Robert, I suspected continued tension between uncle and nephew. His family had hoped that Robert’s years in the army would serve him well. Seemingly not: he had developed an almost haughty air.

“Good to see you, Isaac. Time I updated your wardrobe again.”

Ah, Robert, I thought. At the same time came a grunt from Sir Edward. I caught the glare he directed at his nephew. Sir Edward told Wellings, who had waited by the door, to bring wine and he bade us sit. The wine served and Wellings retired, Sir Edward asked about my travels to New England. He was concerned about the position his brother had given to Robert. Governor of New England was a grand title, but there didn’t seem to be a political or governmental structure in place over which the Governor would preside.

“Aye, sir. That is the primary task of the new Governor—to establish that structure and to impose the orderly rule of law. There are settlements in various stages of development with good people committed to them. There are fishermen, laws unto themselves, and young men brought over as indentured workers, who might or might not have good authorities to direct them. The Governor will need a strong hand but will also have to seek out and win the trust of the

leaders of the settlers.”

Sir Edward turned to Robert and asked for his opinion.

“Uncle, during my time in the army with the Venetians I experienced the depths of depravity among our enemies. A strong arm and fierce discipline were needed and administered. I see no problem in New England comparative to what I learned to handle in the Mediterranean.”

This was said with such disdain that I stiffened. Sir Edward growled and muttered something about an insolent young puppy. He abruptly rose to his feet, and I jumped up. Shaking my hand, he said he was pleased and grateful to have me at Wraxall and would leave me to continue the process of educating his nephew. With that and a curt nod to Robert he left the study.

I sat down. Robert hadn't stirred, but now he frowned and made a barely audible remark disparaging his uncle. I said nothing and pondered what my role should be. It was evident that Robert lacked the attributes of a natural leader. However, years as an army officer must have taught him how to manage and discipline his men within a command structure that could serve as a model for the government of New England. I was worried that Robert might not have the adaptability to modify that experience to suit local conditions. I was troubled by his love of finery and the good and comfortable life. I sighed inwardly. This was going to be difficult. Sir F. was determined that Robert should go. It seemed like a final attempt to make a man of his son.

I asked Robert what he would like to know about the land and the people he would be governing. He apologized, saying that his uncle always made him antagonistic. Out of Sir Edward's hearing he admitted to serious concerns. He had heard wild tales of Indian savagery and worse tales of the settlers' primitive lifestyle. In the Venetian army there were servants, prepared food, and good companionship among his fellow officers. I pointed out that he would be able to choose the men who accompanied him, men who had the variety of attributes needed to deal with the conditions in New England. Yes,

it would be his responsibility to establish the governing structure that his father wanted. But the means would be there, and with the right advice and supporting staff it would be an exciting challenge. Its successful completion would be a remarkable and well-rewarded achievement. We spent the next several hours talking about New England. He asked many questions, alternatively exhilarated to hear of my adventures there and dismayed by the lack of civilization. Over the next week, many hours each day we discussed what he might encounter. It was exhausting work as Robert's attention to detail was poor and I wondered how much he was retaining.

On the eve of my departure, he said that he was grateful for the time I had spent with him. It had convinced him how important my role would be as his chief of staff once in New England and how he could rely on me to ensure that he, as Governor, would be successful. Ye gods, it seemed I had achieved little except dig a bloody great hole for myself! I had no intent or interest in being Robert's chief of staff. I needed to have a long conversation with Sir F. So, instead of returning to Plymouth, Maddie and I left Wraxall on 10 March for London. Sir Edward had been a gracious host, and we enjoyed a comfortable meeting of the minds. When I left, he wished me well and asked me to look after his nephew to the extent I was able, but, he added, "Your life is your own. You are too valuable to be wasted on my nephew. You have much to accomplish. You must look to achieving again the happiness that we all appreciated when dear Aby was alive."

Maddie had been exercised regularly and was eager for the trip back to London. Not me: after my visit with Kate, I had set my heart on going to Plymouth. I had not received a response to my letter to Annie and had written to David Tremain to ask him to check on her and James and whether they were at home. I had not heard back. I was most anxious to resolve the situation and increasingly concerned that Annie had given up on me. At the same time, I was worried about how to discuss Robert when I met with Sir F. How does one tell a father that his son is probably incapable of fulfilling the assignment given him?

Sir F. was away and unavailable to see me for a week once I was back in London. I wrote to Richard Bushrode in Dorchester and advised him I would be pleased to make the Malaga trips and to discuss with him the extent of my investment in the enterprise. I received a note from him to return to Dorchester as soon as I was able.

My meeting with Sir F. was not a comfortable one for either of us. As tactfully as I could, I questioned Robert's dedication to the task Sir F. had set him. I tried to argue the difficulties of having a leader not wholly committed, but Sir F. pinned me down by asking bluntly for my opinion of Robert's competence. I had to be honest. I told him that I feared Robert's experience in the Venetian army had not trained him to deal with the unstructured situation in New England. Nor did his appreciation of civilized behavior lend itself to the rough mode of life over there. Finally, I said I was dismayed by Robert's belief that he would be the face of the government while I did all the work as his chief of staff—something I was not prepared or competent to do. It was a long discussion, at the end of which I promised to accompany Robert to New England and help settle him. Sir F., determined to give his son every chance to achieve success and develop the maturity his father so desperately wanted for him, would find others to support his role as Governor. He did not expect Robert to take up his appointment for another twelve months. In the interim there would be much activity in New England leading to, he trusted, a base of inter-connected settlements, established and self-sufficient, upon which Robert and his team could build a functioning governing structure.

I was dubious, but Sir F. would not be dissuaded. He thanked me for my efforts and released me to pursue my own interests for the rest of the year. He said that he had, as promised, written to P. as soon as the Council had agreed to open up opportunities for merchants outside Council membership. He had received, almost immediately, a request for a trading license from Richard Bushrode, with an option to buy a patent to settle. I was surprised and gratified by Bushrode's speed of action. Sir F. hoped that many more would follow.

He requested my attendance in January 1623 to work on preparations for his son Robert Gorges' transfer to New England. He wished me well, as I did him, and we parted.

I rode back to Dorchester in haste, where a letter awaited me at the Sun from David Tremaine. He had gone to Whimble St. No one was there. Talking to the neighbors, he discovered that Annie and James had been away for many weeks, had returned for a short time, and left again. From Alfred Potts at the Minerva, David learnt that Annie had been called away on family business. She was in Totnes, looking after an ailing aunt. James was with her. I was set to gallop down to Plymouth, but I had to meet first with Richard Bushrode. I was directed to Weymouth and further directed to the *Sweet Rose*. It had been nearly two years since I was last on *Rosie*, and I stood at the dock admiring the ship I knew so well. Obi Burch was first to see me and shouted to James Braddock, bosun, who in turn advised the officer of the watch, first mate Peg Jones, that Mr. Stanfield requested permission to come aboard. I was welcomed right royally, Obi close to tears. I had not seen them since they brought the dying Aby back to Plymouth. J.B. shook my hand and then put his hands on my shoulders and looked deep into my eyes.

"Isaac, you've travelled a rough road these past two years. You've aged. God, I wish I had been with you to share the burden. Welcome back to your family."

I was touched and thanked him. On the quarterdeck I was greeted by Peg and the Skipper, Captain Isaiah Brown, who came up from his cabin. They both expressed their pleasure at seeing me back aboard. The Skipper then invited me down to his cabin, where Richard Bushrode was seated. He rose to meet me.

"Isaac. A welcome return, I see. Good to see you again."

I was surprised and gratified by his familiar greeting.

"Thank you, Mr. Bushrode."

"Come, come. We are partners. Please, I am Richard."

The three of us sat and we talked about the planned trips to Malaga. It seemed that Richard and the Skipper, as joint owners of *Rosie*,

had decided that La Rochelle was no longer commercially viable as their primary trading port. They were intrigued to consider Malaga and the Spanish market a possible alternative. They were aware of the increased risk of piracy, but as *Rosie* had now been reinforced with additional crew, including Owen Llewellyn, master-at-arms, and gained an enviable reputation as a well-disciplined and competent fighting ship, they believed the commercial opportunities outweighed the risks.

As Richard had told me, he had a full cargo organized to ship out, but light with respect to the return. They needed to establish a reliable business agent in Malaga to handle future shipments to and from the port. Because of my past dealings and my close association with *Rosie*, they were delighted that I had agreed to join them in this venture. I had to explain that my last trip to Malaga, some six years previously, had not been without incident when *Tisquantum* had been rescued. I expressed surprise that they should deem that early experience sufficient to warrant their trust in me but assured them that I would try to be as productive to their interests as they hoped. The Skipper smiled and said that he had received a complete account of my adventures in Malaga from his colleague Captain Morris of the *Mary Evans*. While I might not have the existing contacts, my experiences and initiative would more than suffice.

After much discussion, we agreed that I would become a subordinate investor, to the amount of £100, for which I would receive 10% of the net proceeds from the entire trip. Then, depending on the trade I generated, I would be given the option to take a more significant interest in the second trip. Having sealed the agreement with a glass of wine, we got down to the details of the voyage. I was dismayed to learn that the Skipper planned to leave with the morning tide in two days, as I was anxious to go down to Plymouth. Most of Richard's cargo had already been loaded. They were waiting a final wool consignment due tomorrow.

I returned to Dorchester and gather the items I would need for the journey. I saw P. briefly and told him of my meeting with Sir F. He

was pleased to await a letter from Sir F. and would inform Sir Walter and Richard Bushrode accordingly. I had dinner with Will and Elenor. To forestall their questions, I told them that as soon as I returned from Malaga, I planned, come what may, to return to Plymouth to reconnect with Annie and James. They were pleased. Will was concerned that I might have left it too late. Elenor smiled and said her woman's intuition suggested a happy ending.



## — CHAPTER 8 —

### **Journal entry—April 1622**

April 1, we were at sea. Unfortunately, the wind from the west backed and became a southerly, then died for 24 hours. The current swept us east, and we managed to anchor off the Isle of Wight. When the wind returned it stayed southerly, so we remained anchored until a wind appeared to help us on our way southwest to Malaga. The days at anchor enabled me to reconnect with my old crew mates. I was keen to learn of their exploits and wanted to become a part of *Rosie* again. Duties permitting, they were happy to tell their tales and listen to mine for hours at a time. Winds from the northwest blew steadily, and we made fast progress. I was pleased to see that *Rosie* had a steering wheel once more. Fellow sea captains had convinced the Skipper of the advantages of a wheel over a whipstaff, and he had taken care to oversee the installation by a competent team of shipwrights. *Rosie* seemed to enjoy the increased control and maneuverability. The helmsmen certainly did. We landed dockside in Malaga in the afternoon of 29 April.

The merchants receiving our goods were retail shopkeepers with whom Richard Bushrode had negotiated through their agent in Weymouth. They were importers of woolens, grain, and household goods, tools and kitchenware. They were not exporters of raw or finished goods—hence the need for my supposed services. It was

understood that I needed time to investigate commercial opportunities, and I was given a week to do so. The only contact I had was Brother Danel of the Mercedarian Order, and how I prayed he was still around. I went to the Iglesia de Santiago Apóstol, where evening mass was in progress. Afterward, I looked in vain for Danel. I approached a friar. “Brother Danel?” I asked. He shook his head. Damn his vow of silence. Seeing my frustration, he beckoned me to follow him. Outside the church and hidden by a buttress he said, “Danel here tomorrow morning.”

I thanked him. He nodded and slipped away. I returned to *Rosie*, taking a detour to follow the ways I had walked on my previous visit. Nothing seemed to have changed. Arriving at the road on which David Tremaine and I had led our donkeys only to the fight with the pirates, I laughed at the memories.

Early the next morning, I returned to the church and awaited the arrival of Danel. A number of friars appeared, all looking identical with cowls pulled over their heads. I stood by the door of the church trying to identify Danel. Despite my peaceful intent, I had the distinct impression that irritation was growing. I was close to causing a scene when I was nudged in the back by another friar. Damn, I was in trouble, but the friar beckoned me to follow him. Round the corner, the cowl came off. It was Danel with a huge grin.

“Isaac, I was in the church, and as my brothers came in they were all muttering—very softly, vows being vows—about a strange Englishman peering into their faces in a most unfriendly way. They came to the opinion the man was searching for someone. I looked out and saw you. I didn’t recognize you at first, although there was something familiar. Then, as you stepped back with a look of frustration, I remembered. I assume it is me you are looking for. How good to see you again. What are you doing here?”

“Danel, I’m so pleased to see you. I might have changed, but you certainly haven’t. I have need of your advice and help. But this is not the time nor place. Is there somewhere we can talk uninterrupted and you won’t get into trouble?”

“The best way is for you to accompany me back to my monastery. We can talk on the way. I will delay my return so that my brothers go on without me. Come back here in three hours.”

Danel disappeared while I went off to explore, finding a bar on the waterfront. Three hours later, I met up with Danel, and we were soon on the road up and away from Malaga. By the time we got to the olive grove where I had been attacked, we had caught up on the events of the last two years. We stopped and sat under a tree, looking down the hill towards the sea.

“Danel. I am here in Malaga as a trader. My ship, the *Sweet Rose*, has delivered a cargo of merchandise ordered by merchants here. I want to establish my own agent in Malaga to export merchandise back to England. Can you help me?”

“Isaac, there must be numerous import-export agents in Malaga. Why do you not want to use one of them?”

“I could, but they are expensive and have questionable reputations. I want to find someone new with whom I can develop a long-term relationship and who comes with a strong reference that I trust.”

Danel asked me numerous questions, most of which I was able to answer. We talked on through the afternoon until we had reached his monastery. He arranged for me to stay the night and join his brothers in a substantial and silent evening meal. He told me that he would make enquiries and I might have to stay at the monastery for a few days, but he was sure he would be able to help me. The next three days were peaceful. I was invited to attend any of their daily services, which I did. The plain chant in their chapel with its high vaulted roof enveloped the senses. There was no conversation but good and frequent food. I had my own cell and slept well.

On the fourth day, Danel brought another friar to meet me who was in charge of the monastery grounds. They had olive groves, vineyards, and many acres of wheat and barley. In addition, they had extensive vegetable fields, as well as goats from which they produced butter and cheese. They produced much more than they needed, so they bartered with local farmers and suppliers for the goods and

essentials they couldn't provide themselves. We engaged in a long discussion, with Danel acting as interpreter. The monastery was interested in the financial benefits of establishing an export business. The brothers had little need for money themselves, but they had to deal with the pirates who continued to demand large ransom payments for the sailors they captured for the Arab slave markets. Until now their cash requirements had been provided, barely, from their Mercedarian order based in Barcelona. So, a new flow of money to replenish and build their cash reserves was attractive to them. My interests were wine and brandy primarily, but fine linen, silks, spices, and exotic woods were also valuable commodities.

In the short time available before *Rosie* departed Malaga, little could be arranged. However, Danel and I did return to the harbor with the first of three ox carts laden with a mixture of supplies—olives, olive oil, wine, and brandy—all from the stores of the monastery. I found a business agent in Malaga who accepted my credit, so I was able to recompense the monastery. The brothers seemed delighted and promised to provide a full cargo for me on my next trip, which I said would take place in about six weeks. By the following morning, the third cart had delivered its load and we sailed shortly thereafter. A slow but straightforward passage with no incidents.

### **Journal entry—*June 1622***

We were quayside in the Pool by 2 June. Richard Bushrode was in Plymouth when we arrived, and we had a happy meeting. The merchants working with Sir F. were alerted and came aboard to view and negotiate for the cargo. I left Richard to deal with them and the customs officers, went ashore, and headed for home full of anticipation. No one was there, and my heart sank. I had convinced myself that Annie and James would have returned by now. I went to find David Tremaine, whom I assumed was at the Fort with John Gorges. Captain Turner greeted me and informed me that David was with

Gorges on a trip down to Cornwall and would not be back for a week. I moved on to the Minerva and Alfred Potts.

“Your friend, David Tremaine, was in two months or so ago asking after Annie. I told him that as far as I knew she had gone to Totnes to care for my sister. My sister died a week ago, God rest her soul. So I imagine she will be back once the family affairs are dealt with.”

I expressed condolences, which Alfred brushed aside.

“I never got on with my sister. We were strangers to each other over the past few years with no contact at all. Annie, bless her, despite my sister’s miserable attitude, always kept in touch. When she fell ill, Annie went immediately.”

I asked how Annie was and whether Alfred knew anything about James’ health.

“Sorry, Isaac. I haven’t been in touch with Annie since she left. I have no idea how James is, either. Annie knew I wanted nothing to do with my sister, so she did not try to contact me. In fact, I only heard about her death a few days ago through a friend. So I can’t tell you for sure how Annie feels about things, if you see what I mean. You’ve been away a long time. Annie told me a while ago that she was worried about you. She loves James, though. I think she fears you might have abandoned them both.”

Weighed down by his words, I fell silent. I was determined to ride to Totnes to find Annie and James. Next morning, Maddie and I set off and by lunch time we were in Totnes searching for the address given to me by Alfred. When we reached the back lane where it was located, and I dismounted and walked, leading Maddie down the rough and rutted lane. A woman was looking out of a door as I passed, and I asked for the house. She told me the old woman had died. I said I was looking for the young lady who had been looking after her.

“Ah, Annie. Now there’s a fine young woman. To think that such a lady should have come from the same tree as her aunt and those sons of hers. I don’t wish to speak ill of the dead, but the old woman is better off where she has gone—for all concerned.”

With that she went back inside. A young lad told me which house I wanted. I walked up to the front door and knocked. No answer. I went next door and knocked. A woman came to the door, carrying an infant. I asked if she knew Annie and James.

“Yes, she became a good friend, and James was such a polite little boy. Sadly, you’ve missed them.”

I asked when the woman had had last seen them. After reflecting a moment, she said it was when they both left with a gentleman. I felt I had just had a bucket of cold water thrown over me.

“When was that?”

“About three days ago.”

“Do you know where they were going?”

“No, I don’t. They left with several bags as if they would not be coming back. Annie gave me a hug when she left, as if I wouldn’t be seeing her again.”

She paused and looked up at me with a frown. “And who might you be asking after Annie?”

I explained that Annie was an old friend and that James was my son. I had been away and was only recently back.

“Now, don’t you fret, dear. Annie loves the child and will take good care of him.”

That was not what I was worried about. Annie had left with a man, taking James with her. Was this the same man Viv had mentioned? And where had they gone? I thanked the lady and trudged away.

The next two weeks were spent gathering a full cargo for the return trip to Malaga. The products we had brought back found willing buyers at a substantial profit. Richard and the Skipper, as co-owners of *Rosie*, were delighted. I was repaid for my outlay in Malaga and rewarded with a sizeable return on my original £100. For the next trip, we agreed that I reinvest the original amount; given my success in finding a new agent in Malaga, however, they promised to make me the primary investor with 75% on the net return on the cargo brought back, provided that I pay for it in the same way I had previously. I

was, of course, pleased, yet I was distracted. My two partners were aware that something was the matter, but as I said nothing they did not ask questions.

A terrible storm struck up on 19 June along the south coast. Many ships anchored in Plymouth Sound were sunk, with much loss of life. *Rosie* was safe in the Pool, but the upheaval delayed our departure.

### **Journal entry—July 1622**

Our return trip to Malaga was uneventful, and we were dockside by 20 July. While *Rosie* was being unloaded, I went to the Iglesia de Santiago Apóstol and asked to send to the monastery a message that I had returned. Later that day Danel appeared. I invited him aboard and introduced him to the Skipper. The monastery had assembled a cargo of casks of wines, brandy, and olive oil as well as bundles of fine linen. The friars would deliver it to the dock over the next three days. Delivery proved straightforward: the wagon arrived, the casks were off loaded and stowed aboard, the wagon left to fetch the next load, and so on until the hold was full. I was presented with the manifest, which listed every item and its cost. The Skipper dealt with the paperwork while I paid a visit to the business agent, who advanced me the amount required against my account and stamped my pass book. I returned to pay Danel and the duties due on the exports. Ten days after our arrival we left Malaga, heading for Plymouth. The voyage back was the first time that I was the principal investor in the shipment of commercial freight, so I had an overwhelming sense of responsibility and worry that nothing untoward happen on the way home.

We were a week out from Malaga when the masthead lookout shouted, "Sail on starboard bow, heading in our direction." Peg Jones sent J.B. up the ratlines with a telescope. He came down quickly to report. A large vessel flying French colors, likely a pirate aiming to cut us off. Skipper was called to the quarterdeck and informed. He called to the gunner, Jeremiah Babbs.

“Mr. Babbs. Gun crews to their stations. Load starboard cannon, grape, and canister, and run out. Then do likewise with larboard.”

“Isaac, if they see we mean to fight, they may back off. We aren’t big enough to warrant much effort and potential damage. If they are serious, they will aim at the rigging and try to board us. I would be grateful to have you on the main deck ready to repel boarders with the rest of the crew, who will be armed with cutlass and pike.”

The vessel came up fast. With weather gage and more heavily armed and manned than *Rosie*, it had all the advantage. A warning shot was fired across our bow. Our four starboard cannon were run out. The French flag was lowered and replaced by a black one. The ship edged closer, until the captain—seemingly a privateer turned pirate—was able to hale us.

“Stand down your guns. We intend to board. Any resistance, and we will blow you out of the water.”

Skipper looked around *Rosie*. Everyone was in place.

“Mr. Babbs. Fire at will, and reload.”

Our four cannon made a ragged broadside. On the Skipper’s command, *Rosie* started to turn toward the pirate ship. The pirate fired its broadside. Three ragged holes appeared in our main course, some rigging down but no other damage; the rasping sound of grapeshot passed overhead to splash some distance away to larboard. *Rosie*’s fo’c’sle starboard swivel fired. *Rosie* continued to round and was now aiming to cut across the pirate’s stern. The pirate was too quick. It turned toward *Rosie*.

“Mr. Babbs. Larboard guns—fire at will.”

*Rosie*’s starboard broadside had been too high over the decks but brought down a tangle of rigging, which was quickly cleared away. The larboard broadside was more effective, taking out the foremast lines and killing a number of the crew massed on the pirate’s fo’c’sle. The starboard swivel had caused further pirate injuries, but not enough. The pirate ship continued to turn and bore down on us. Another shot from its larboard bow cannon tore through rigging and brought down *Rosie*’s main course spar. I was standing, sword



in hand, on the main deck, by the main hatch, open to give light to the gun crew. The broken spar dropped down and through the hatch like a spear, smashing through the lower hatch and into the hold. A large block followed and hit my head and left shoulder. As I blacked out I felt myself fall through the hatch, bounce off the lower hatch cover, and follow the spar into the hold. I knew no more.

Coming to, I was vaguely aware of gunshots, shouts, screams, and the grinding of two hulls. I felt myself blacking out again, my face bloody, my shoulder numb. All I could do was roll myself away from the hatch. Some survival instinct had me crawl over the barrels to a row of linen bundles hard up against the hull. When I awoke, I was jammed between the hull and the bundles. I must have slipped down while unconscious. I was well hidden and took stock. *Rosie* was under sail. It was dark and the wind on the larboard bow. If the wind hadn't changed, we were heading southwest. I was in bad shape, barely able to move my left arm. My sleeve was torn and bloody, and my shoulder and head hurt like hell. Something was wrong with my chest, and my leg throbbed. A long splinter was sticking into my thigh and, teeth clenched, I removed it. Blood ran, and I pressed my hand hard down on the open wound. I heard metal striking on metal, which sounded like chains rattling, and muttered voices, an oath, and then silence. After a few minutes, the blood reduced to a trickle.

Quietly, ignoring the pain, I crept up out of my hiding place. I saw a lantern swinging from a beam. Under it, a pirate sat on a barrel holding a large cutlass, which he was sharpening. The rattle of chains came from farther for'ard. I couldn't see more from my position, so I inched forward, over barrels but still against the side of the hull. *Rosie* was making sufficient noise for mine to be hidden. Then the sobering sight: of *Rosie's* crew manacled about their ankles to chains attached to deck bolts. They were able to sit, but the chains were short, so they could not move their feet more than a few inches. I looked for the Skipper and Peg, who were not there. Then I saw J.B., his back against the side of the hull. He was bloodied and had a rag round his right arm. The stack of barrels I was on came up short

of the captive crewmen but provided some cover from the guard, whose back was toward me. Slowly, I moved forward. How the hell was I to catch J.B.'s attention without alerting the guard?

I felt in my pocket—nothing. I had my dirk in its sheath and didn't know where my sword was. A button, just the thing! I cut one off my jerkin and gently tossed it at J.B. It hit his jaw and fell into his lap. Startled, he looked down. I could see his mind working. Where the hell had that button come from? He turned his head and started searching for a reason. In other circumstances I would have laughed. He saw me, at least my shape. He glanced at the guard, who was busy with his cutlass. He turned back to me. I had made myself a little more visible, and he recognized me. I put my finger to my lips, and he nodded. He slumped back, unable to do anything. It was up to me.

I moved back to a safer location and thought about it. I needed to talk to J.B. What had happened? Where was the Skipper? How many of the crew were still alive? We were obviously heading toward the Mediterranean and slavery. How many pirates were there on *Rosie*? Was she being sailed in the company of the pirate ship, or had she been sent under a prize crew back to base? Somehow I had to take back *Rosie*. I was in no condition to attack the guard, but I could try to distract him. How? From the feel of *Rosie*, the weather looked to be changing, the wind backing and blowing harder, now abeam. The Bay of Biscay was stirring itself, and we could be in for a blow, which might help later. Meantime, a diversion was needed. The barrels around me were full of brandy. Could the guard be persuaded to partake? I needed to find a container for some brandy and then tap into a suitable barrel. No bowl or mug at hand, but I saw the dim outline of a bucket hanging from a hook near the for'ard pump casing. I eased my way over to it—too big and filthy. I looked back at J.B, who was sipping from a water beaker. Aha! Crawling back toward J.B, I gestured that I wanted his beaker. He checked the guard, who still had his back to the sailors. Then, emptying it, he tossed the beaker to me. I caught it after a fumble, a dagger-like pain in my side. Ye gods, to drop it, the noise would have been fatal.

Now, how to get some brandy?

At the foot of the main mast was a box of wedges for the barrels, along with a wooden mallet. I felt my way aft away from the guard toward the barrels. In the darkness I moved my hand over one. It had a cork bung, but I needed to turn the barrel so the bung was on the top side. Too heavy and I was in bad shape. Then I remembered there were some firkins of brandy. I felt my way along the stack until I found them—these I could manage. I needed to fill the beaker and then recork the firkin, all without spilling, as the smell of brandy in the scuppers would alert the guard. I was able to hold a wedge in my left hand. With my dirk I whittled the thin end of the wedge to a point and then stuck it into the firkin's cork with a few gentle taps of the mallet. I then started levering the wedge. I placed the handle of my dirk under the protruding end, close up to the bung, tapping down on the outer end of the wedge to force the cork upward. As I tapped down I felt a little movement. I took the wedge out, stuck it in the other side of the cork, and repeated the action. Slowly I dragged the cork from its bed. Next: to pour brandy into the beaker without spilling it. Difficult, as I had to turn the firkin to coincide with the right motion from *Rosie*. Eventually I managed to put about a quart into the beaker. I rebunged and reset the firkin, suitably wedged on its side with its fellows. Resting a minute to let the pain subside gave me time to think. I had the brandy—how do I get the guard to drink it?

I needed J.B. to be creative. I slowly worked my way back to him. J.B. saw the beaker and was near enough to smell it. I pointed to the guard and made a gesture with my hand, an imaginary cup to my mouth. J.B. grinned. I put the beaker down behind a barrel, close to J.B. but out of the guard's sight, and withdrew. From a distance, I saw J.B. swing round, rattling his chains and seeming to try to grab something just out of reach. The guard looked round and watched J.B. puzzled. He got up and shambled over.

“What the fuck are you doing?”

The guard smelt the brandy.

“What the hell are you doing with that?”

I heard J.B. mutter something about the previous guard having hidden it for his own use and that he, J.B., was after a bit of it himself. The guard laughed and took the beaker back to his seat. By now the other *Rosie* crewmembers were interested. The guard, seeing his audience, laughed again.

“Not for you, my duckies. This is mine.”

With that he put the beaker to his lips and took a large swig. He put it down and wiped his mouth.

“That was good.”

Over about thirty minutes, he had consumed much of the contents and grown unsteady. A larger wave than normal and he rolled off his barrel, banging his head before passing out. J.B. told the crew to keep quiet as I appeared. He told me that the guard held the key to the manacles. There were no more than about a dozen pirates forming the prize crew under the command of the pirate first mate, a little rat of a man. *Rosie*'s crew had been warned that if they became a nuisance, the pirate mate would immediately kill the Skipper and throw him overboard. Where was the Skipper? J.B. thought in the Great Cabin with Peg. He said that Mr. Glynn, the second mate, was dead, butchered in cold blood by the pirate mate, as an example to behave. Five crewmen were dead; the rest here, banged and bloody but otherwise in fair shape. The prize crew were ordered to take *Rosie* and their captives back to Tripoli while the pirate ship went elsewhere. I thought about it.

“J.B, I need to go and rescue the Skipper and, if I can, Peg. I will get you the key, but after freeing the crew you will need to stay here till the Skipper is safe. I think a storm is coming, so the pirates will be hard at it. I will wait till then. You should free the crew now, deal with the guard, and be prepared to tackle any replacement. After I leave, give me five minutes to get to the Great Cabin, deal with the pirate captain, and free the Skipper. In the storm, you should be able to round up the pirates and take control.”

So, after retrieving the key from the unconscious pirate and giving it to J.B, I waited. The storm came, and *Rosie* became quite lively.

With the wind abeam, the movement was less than it might have been. The noise in the hold was deafening, however, and it was difficult to stand. The crew were released, the drunken guard gagged and manacled. They waited on me, fully briefed by J.B. With sounds on deck of running feet, flapping sails, and thunderous rain, I limped away. Up to the main deck, I grabbed a hat and oilskins, which I could put only over my shoulders, then ventured out to the waist. The pirates were busy. I was shouted at and raised a hand, ducking under the quarterdeck to make my way to the Great Cabin. I went in and saw the Skipper, chained much as his crew had been. Peg was at his feet, chained and looking bad, crusted blood over his face and chest. The Skipper looked up and saw me. I took my hat off. His eyes widened in shock, and then he laughed.

“Who else!!”

I grinned at him.

“The Pirate mate has the key on him,” the Skipper told me.

I said I had five minutes, now three, to deal with the pirate mate and explained why: I needed to get to the quarterdeck at the moment *Rosie*'s crew swarmed out of the hold. With that, judging my time, I went to the quarterdeck steps. I heard a noise, shouts below, and mounted, stumbling up the steps. The rat-like pirate mate—J.B.'s description proved accurate—was close by, leaning over the rail to find out what the commotion was about. He barely glanced at me with oilskins and hat pulled firmly over my head. With dirk in hand I went behind him and, remembering Glynn's fate, struck him hard in the side. He collapsed without a word. The helmsman shouted but couldn't leave his position while *Rosie* fought to broach. Searching the pirate mate, I found the key on a strap attached to his belt. A quick slash with the dirk, and it was free. Meantime, *Rosie*'s crew led by J.B. were chasing down the pirates, binding them and taking them below. I half fell as I made my painful way back down and into the cabin. As I handed the key to the Skipper, he shouted a warning, and I turned. A pirate bursting into the cabin lunged at me with his cutlass. I tried deflecting it with my dirk. Not possible, and I knew no more.

## — CHAPTER 9 —

### **Journal entry**—*August – September 1622*

When I was next aware of my surroundings, I was in bed at home in Plymouth. Too tired and sore to think much about why I was there and how, I drifted back to sleep. Next time I woke up, Doc Vines was bending over me.

“We’ve been worried about you. Since they brought you home, you have been fighting for your life. But I would say you are now on the mend. You have a fever and need plenty of rest. So, take advantage—stay in bed and sleep. I will come in every day to check that you continue to progress.”

I asked where Annie and James were. Doc shook his head. When he got to the house, J.B. and Obi had met him. No sign of Annie or James, but he told me not to worry, he was sure they would be here shortly. Meanwhile, he had arranged for Beth Webster to look after me. Fighting a headache that got worse and worse, with thoughts of Annie and James swirling about my mind, I lost consciousness.

When I came to my senses, Annie was there with an arm round my shoulders, lifting me up to drink a cup of broth.

“So, my sleeping beauty. You’re awake at last.”

She smiled down at me and lay me back gently with my head on a pillow. She looked tired, and there were worry lines around her eyes and on her forehead. I gazed up at her, still befuddled. It had been

over six months since I had last seen her. Now, she was here but for how long? I realized how much I had missed her and was deeply happy to have her here with me. I smiled.

“Hello, Annie. It is good to see you. I’m so sorry.”

She looked down and slowly shook her head. We just gazed at each other. No words; none were needed.

“I’m sure you would like to see James.”

I nodded.

She left and returned holding the hand of a strapping young lad, close to three years old, who stared at me with wide open eyes, hiding behind Annie and peeking at me round her dress. He had Aby’s open face, her golden brown hair, and her lovely brown eyes. But thank God that Annie had been here to love and cherish the boy. She was his mother. He had no memory of Aby.

James was understandably confused about this bandaged individual sleeping in Annie’s bed. Annie gently brought him to me.

“James, this is your father. He has been away on a long voyage and has been badly hurt. He has now come home to us.”

James gazed at me, his eyes tracing the bandages on my head and shoulder. Someone had shaved my head, including my full beard. Still, he appeared to remember me.

“Do you have stories?” he whispered.

“Yes, James. I have many, many stories to tell you.”

James nodded with a serious look on his face. Then he frowned.

“Are they happy stories?”

“Yes, I will tell you happy stories.”

I looked up at Annie. She had tears in her eyes. I turned back to James.

“James, I must go back to sleep now. It is the best way for me to get better. Tomorrow I will tell you a happy story.”

With that James was led from the room, looking over his shoulder at me as he left. A little later Annie came back.

“How are you feeling?”

“Very sore. Tell me, what happened? When did you get here?”

“Alfred sent me a message that you had returned. We came immediately. After my aunt’s death, my brother took James and me to stay with his family, outside Plymouth, to rest and recover from a long and tiresome time with a woman who hated life and feared death. And to get away from her son Caleb, my black-sheep cousin, about whom I have no wish to talk further, ever.”

I thought that begged investigation, but not now.

“I talked to Dr. Vines and Beth,” Annie continued.

“Beth?”

“Beth Webster—she was James’ wet nurse. As I understand it, you were brought here as soon as *Rosie* reached port ten days ago. J.B., Obi, and two other crewmen carried you on a stretcher. The doctor had been called and arrived at the same time. You lost a lot of blood. He said it was a miracle you were still alive and doubted you would survive. You had a deep cut on the left side of your head and a gash and bruising on the right side. J.B. said the head wound was from a cutlass. A piece of your ear is missing. Luckily the cutlass missed your eye, but it slashed open your cheek. So you are going to have an interesting scar. You have a bruised left shoulder, a bad gash on your arm, a couple of broken ribs, and another wound on your right leg. In fact, you are a mess. The doctor says it looked like you had a nasty fall.”

She paused and gazed down at me with tears in her eyes, which she brushed away with a sigh, then a smile.

“It seems you rescued *Rosie* and the crew from pirates. They are desperately worried about your condition, saying you had paid a terrible price to save them. J.B. and Obi have been back a number of times. They are waiting to be allowed to visit you. Oh, before I forget, Mr. Bushrode has been by and wishes to see you when you have recovered sufficiently.”

She stopped again, shook her head, and laughed.

“Oh Isaac, my dear, dear man. What am I to do with you? Anyway, back to your exploits. You freed the crew, killed the pirate captain, and released Captain Brown. Thereupon you were cut down by a rampaging pirate before he was killed by J.B. J.B. blames himself.



He said he had been too slow to react. Now, can you tell me how all this happened?”

I told her as she sat on the bed, holding my hand. I went back to sleep, to be woken by Annie returning with a bowl of hot broth, which she spooned into my mouth. I was able to eat some bread, dipped in the broth. She told me that Beth and the doctor had cut away as much of my hair as they could to get to the wounds. But, given my condition, they had not wanted to disturb me, cleaning and bandaging the wounds as best they could.

“As you were unconscious with a fever when I returned, I decided that the wounds needed proper attention. Removing your beard was a nightmare. I had to shave all the hair on your face and head so the wounds could be cleaned, stitched up, and dressed properly. Shaving round that cut, with your teeth showing through the cheek, was unspeakable. You were out of it for two days, so I had time to clean you up properly.”

Still, she said with a laugh, it was good to see me. It was clear there was much that needed to be spoken between us, but I was half asleep again. Annie left me with a kiss, and I slept.

Over the next several days, I grew stronger. Doc Vines came every day, and it was a pleasure to see him again. He advised me to start working my muscles, which required me to get out of bed for short periods. At first I needed to lean heavily on Annie. Then, overcoming his initial shyness, James joined in, treating it like a game he enjoyed playing. We were becoming a family again. Many visitors came to wish me well but were sent away before they could tire me out. Obi wanted to stay to wait on me, but Annie said that was her job and no one, repeat, no one, was going to take that away from her.

I had long conversations with Annie. I had jumped to the wrong conclusion, again, just as I had with my mistaken assumption about Aby and Will, so many years ago. Annie and James' absences were easily explained. I had not told them I was coming back to Plymouth. Her trip to Cornwall was to visit a friend with no mention of any man courting her. Then, once she was back home, Annie's

cousin had come to Plymouth to fetch her to care for his mother. When I was told by a neighbor that Annie and James had left with a man, I had assumed the worst. Annie listened to my rambling explanations. Then, after a long silence she leant over and kissed me.

“Poor, sweet boy. How you have suffered. But that is past; now we must look forward. Be patient, you are still recovering. Don’t overtax your head with thoughts. What will be is already beginning.”

By the end of the week, Doc Vines pronounced me well enough not to need his administrations any longer, especially as Annie was proving such a fine nurse. He shook my hand warmly and with a twinkle wished Annie and me well. He tousled James’ hair as he left. The next decision was about the sleeping arrangements. I had been using Annie’s bed while she slept in the main bedroom with the high four poster. Annie insisted that now I was well enough to return to my bedroom and she would reclaim her own. I wanted Annie to stay and share my bed but was too shy to mention it. As Annie had said, be patient, what will be has begun.

One evening about a fortnight later, sitting together by the fire in the kitchen, I summoned my courage to ask Annie about the sleeping arrangements.

“Isaac Stanfield. I have been waiting to lay with you since 27 November 1613.”

“When? Annie, that’s nine years ago.”

“Silly boy, I have wanted you from the moment I seduced you. I hope you remember.”

I was dumbfounded. I hadn’t put it all together. Deep down the knowledge was there, but I had repressed it. Annie loving me and being my friend for all those years. Annie watching me marry Aby, she loving Aby and loving Aby’s child. I wanted to cry.

“Dear, sweet Annie, I do so love you.”

Rising, she took my hand.

“Tonight we celebrate. First, we will have the supper I have cooked for us. Second, we will go to bed, and third, maybe we will eventually sleep.”

We had the supper with wine. We sat at opposite ends of the table so we weren't tempted to touch each other. We smiled and tried to make polite conversation, but our minds were elsewhere. I imagined what was going on beneath Annie's deceptively calm expression after all I had done and not done in the nine years since our first night together. Was she feeling the same wonderment? We stopped talking and looked deeply into each other's eyes, then laughed in shared anticipation.

Taking me by the hand, Annie led me upstairs. We tiptoed past the sleeping James to the main bedroom, warm and inviting in the glow of candles and a roaring fire. We embraced, and she began to undress me, slowly, tracing her fingers over my scars and down my chest to my stomach. Then with trembling fingers I undressed Annie. I gazed at her body, full breasts proud, her soft belly down to the mat of hair nestled between her legs. In bed at first I was tentative. Annie was gentle. We relaxed and wanted it never to end. Afterward, as we lay together we hugged and cried and laughed and professed our love for each other. We slept as one.

My recovery accelerated. I regrew my beard and hair to hide the worst of the ravages. Interestingly, the hair over the scar on my cheek came in white, giving me a definite piebald look. James was fascinated, and whenever in my arms he would stroke it. I was soon walking without help and, accompanied by Annie and James, went to Sutton Pool, where we saw *Rosie* now anchored away from the dock. We were able to attend Sunday morning service at St Andrew's. Many people came up to me after the service and welcomed me back, some congratulating me. *Rosie's* adventure with the pirates was becoming common knowledge. Captain Turner came by during the week and reminded me that my report on that adventure was still awaited. I asked why the interest.

"Mr. Stanfield, the *Sweet Rose* was captured by pirates, becoming stolen property. You were instrumental, from what we hear, in its recapture. The Admiralty Prize Court needs your testimony in writing."

“But surely, the capture by pirates was momentary. Apart from the Crown gaining a few pirates, nothing changed, nothing was lost.”

Captain Turner smiled at my innocence. “You lost an officer—murdered, I understand. Many of your crew were killed or injured, including yourself. If the *Sweet Rose* had come into port and nothing was said, perhaps nothing would have been done, at least to start with. But Captain Brown reported the engagement with the pirate ship. He stated that you retook the *Sweet Rose*, which technically had become a pirate vessel crewed by pirates. Not only that, the pirates had transferred previously captured booty to the *Sweet Rose* for transport back to their base. That must be included in the accounting.”

I had no idea that the pirates were transporting ill-gotten gains in *Rosie*. It must have been stored on the lower deck. The machinations of the Prize Court were beyond me. I promised to complete my report and deliver it to Captain Turner the next morning. I was visited by my business manager, Ebenezer Scroud. We sat at the kitchen table while Annie took James for a walk. He had many papers and lists of accounts. He seemed, for him, to be quite excited. I, on the other hand, saw a wearisome prospect ahead of me. Without taking into account any findings from the Court, he needed to confirm all financial transactions in my recent investments with Richard Bushrode. He wished to update me on the state of my affairs with respect to the investment I had made as a junior partner of Sir Ferdinando Gorges. The meeting was a long one, and most of the information passed me by.

I did realize early on that Scroud was an inestimably sound and practical businessman and a godsend as my manager. It turned out that the 20 percent of my assets that I had invested back in 1617 with Sir F. had returned a considerable profit. I had been vaguely aware of the occasional report but had paid little heed with so much else going on in my life. But now Scroud had cornered me and was determined to provide a full accounting. As my assets grew, the 20 percent invested grew likewise. In 1617, when that agreement had been made with Sir F., my assets stood at £550. I had on average been receiving a 10-percent return from my investment with Sir F. annually

for the past 5 years, which translated, according to Scroud, to being close on £180. He went through the accounts for each year and tried to explain what a compounding interest rate was. There had been depletions where I had taken out my living expenses, mostly covered by the interest payments I had received on numerous further opportunistic investments made by Scroud on my behalf. The cost of renting the house on Whimple Street was accounted for. There were the monthly payments made to support Annie. We came to other investments made in trade, such as my trips to Honfleur and Leiden, all meticulously accounted for.

Finally, Scroud wanted the details of my trips to Malaga. On the first trip, what had I invested, what was the shareholding, and what had been the return? He had a copy of the paperwork from Richard Bushrode and ticked off a list as I recounted the details. He corrected me on occasion but seemed satisfied with my responses. We came to the second trip. There he sat back, removed his spectacles, rubbed his forehead, and shook his head. He had the agreement I signed with Richard and the Skipper and knew the amount I had invested at the start. I told him that I had paid the monastery approximately £100 for the merchandise they provided. Scroud had a copy of the manifest, obtained from the Skipper. However, the cargo had all been bonded by Customs as soon as officials found out about the piracy. There was no way of knowing what the outcome would be. A price would be paid, as the Crown always received a significant portion of any piracy prize awarded by the Admiralty Court.

I was shaken. That seemed unfair. We captured the pirates and saved our ship and its cargo, yet we had to pay a penalty. Scroud sighed and shrugged his shoulders. He said that as I was still technically an employee of the Governor of Plymouth Fort, the Vice-Admiral for Devon, in charge of the Court, might be accommodating. The Vice-Admiral, Sir John Eliot, was a friend of the Gorges family, and John Gorges was following the situation closely. More to the point, my friend David Tremaine was doing so on Mr. Gorges' behalf. Scroud would give no opinion on what my financial return

might be. Suffice it to say, excluding any costs incurred with respect to the second Malaga trip I had over £1000 in my account. I should consider myself a wealthy man. I thanked Scroud and told him that as my affairs were becoming more and more complex he should consider increasing his fee, a suggestion he was pleased to accept.

I met with the Skipper on *Rosie*. He was frustrated with *Rosie* remaining impounded until the Admiralty Court had made its judgement, as he was losing business. However, the situation did enable him to carry out much needed repairs and maintenance, which kept the crew at work. He refused to speculate about the outcome, though he felt that as long as the Court chose not to get bogged down in detail, the judgement should be straightforward. They had been sitting on the case for several weeks, and he understood that Sir Ferdinando was becoming agitated on our behalf.

I then met with the surviving crew members, now recovered, and found that J.B. was keeping them active. I was able to spend time with Obi. He had continued to mature and had become a fine and knowledgeable seaman. I could see him as a future bosun's mate. He still saw me as someone to revere, to my discomfort, my further exploits only enhancing his devotion. J.B. had become a big brother figure for him. Watching them together, I felt that each did the other a power of good. Babbs was working on a new configuration for his guns. He and the Skipper wanted more fire power. There wasn't room, however, not the way *Rosie* was constructed on the gun deck. Malaga looked to be profitable, but the attendant risks were high, possibly too high. I asked what difference to risk and reward would there be if *Rosie* sailed together with a like manned and gunned ship. That set them thinking.

The Skipper responded, "I think it would make a hell of a difference. Pirates tend to operate alone. They would find it difficult to deal with two determined prey, especially if the prey was well drilled. I believe you have something we should consider."

The meeting ended, and as I left I said, "I will talk to Richard Bushrode about it. Depending on the availability of cargo, we could

halve the number of trips but double the capacity by using two ships.”

Richard was back in Weymouth, so I wrote a note to him explaining the idea and asking to discuss it when we next met. I told him I was still in recovery but was getting stronger by the day.

Annie and I settled into a comfortable and loving relationship, behaving openly as a couple. It wasn't long before certain members of St. Andrew's congregation began to question our living together “in sin” with a child. While such gossip left me amused, I saw it worried Annie. One evening, cuddled together on the sofa in front of a warming fire, I asked her about our situation.

“What are you asking me, my man?”

I looked surprised. I could be really stupid at times. Annie, smiling with a gleam in her eye, was silent. I took her hand and knelt down before her.

“Annie Potts, the light of my life, will you do me the honor of marrying me?”

“Isaac Stanfield. Annie Potts would be delighted to accept your proposal.”

We both laughed, hugged, and went to bed to celebrate. We slept little, explored much, and loved till I pleaded exhaustion. By which time, Annie was equally spent.

### **Journal entry—October 1622**

I wanted P. to marry us, and Annie was eager to go to Dorchester to learn first-hand about the place and people that had been so much a part of my life. We planned to take James with us, so I thought we should sail to Weymouth but Annie, who rode Tess regularly, suggested horseback. When I asked about James, Annie said she had been giving him riding lessons. To do so, she had—surreptitiously—learnt to ride astride, a practice much frowned on for women. She wore suitable clothing and had rigged straps on the front of her saddle, hanging down either side, which James, sitting between Annie's

legs and holding onto the pommel, used as stirrups. Annie had a backpack into which she placed James when he tired. The backpack had holes in the bottom for his legs to stick out with just his head peeking out of the top as he slept soundly with the rocking of Tess's walking gait.

As soon as I was able, I had started riding Maddie both for my and for her exercise. To aid my full recovery, I renewed my fencing lessons with Stephen Rockwell. Progress was slow. I had lost not only strength and agility but also coordination. Stephen was shocked at my deterioration but worked me hard with good results. He told me to practice wherever I was and gave me suitable exercises in the absence of a dueling partner. By mid-October I felt I was fit enough. If James could make the journey, so could I. I sent a note to Will saying that I planned to be in Dorchester in about ten days and hoped to spend time with him and Elenor. I asked him to tell Jeremiah Gosling at the Sun and let P. know. I wanted to keep the presence of Annie and James a surprise. Annie was doubtful about that, suggesting that my friends might need notice of our intentions in order to get used to the idea of our marriage. But I said that having her there in person would prevent any uncontrolled speculation that might occur if they were informed ahead of time of her arrival. Annie tried to work that out, gave up, and acquiesced.

We planned to ride for no more than four hours a day—two in the morning and two in the afternoon. We would ride along the coastal route and stop at our convenience. I told Annie that I had ridden the whole way and was keen to tell her about the adventures I had met. We had many rivers to cross by ferry, which would please James, starting with the Plym at Cattedown. There were attractive inns near every ferry stop. Travelling mid-October, we would have little problem finding lodgings, and with the good weather we should be able to ride in company with other travelers.

It turned out much as we hoped. We left on a clear, bright morning, and the weather stayed fine. I had arranged for a pack horse from the local livery to carry all the extras that came with Annie



and James. The journey was an excitement for James, and we found the inns welcoming and comfortable. We never rode so long for it to be a burden. Each day was a new adventure. For much of the time James rode with me. We talked and played games, and I named all that nature offered us. Annie, riding beside me, loved that James and I were so in harmony with each other. I didn't allow myself to think about how much I had missed of this precious child's life. We left the coastal road to head towards Dorchester. Before entering town, we settled down for a lazy lunch on top of Eggardon Hill. I told James about the Romans marching up the hill with their armor shining, spears twinkling in the sun, the tramp of their feet and the sound of their songs as they made their way to their camp in Dorchester. James paced up and down, singing his own marching song, happy and so alive. We sat, the three of us, and counted the birds flying over and around us, with sparrows hopping up to us in hope of crumbs. James was able to identify many of the birds. Pointing to each, he gave the correct name or another he made up. It didn't matter—he was entranced and entrancing. Drowsy, he slept in his pack on my back as we rode down the hill.

We went to Lower Burton and the Sun. Jeremiah was there to greet us, and I introduced him to Annie. Immediately captivated, he welcomed her, offered her his arm, and escorted her into his establishment. With James asleep on my back I saw to the horses and met Annie and Jeremiah in the bar. They were deep in discussion. My arrival brought their conversation to an end, and Jeremiah showed us to Aby's and my old room, now Annie's and my room. A crib was fetched and set up in the room for James. Messages were waiting for me from Will and P. I sent notes back saying I would meet with them in the morning. Annie and I decided to be alone together for the evening. We put James to bed and arranged for a maid to keep an eye on him while we were out.

We walked into Dorchester and strolled arm in arm along West Street, then down South Street. I saw people I knew, but no one recognized me. Annie wanted to know everything about the buildings,

the fire, and town's damage and recovery from that terrible event. The Free School, now rebuilt, fascinated her. She imagined me as a schoolboy being caned by a zealous master for not knowing my Latin. We examined the new brewery that had been built to ensure an adequate, untainted drinking supply. The profits were to support the new hospital, a residential educational establishment for young indigent children. Annie was amused by the idea of an alcoholic beverage being brewed to benefit children. She wanted to enter Holy Trinity Church and sit in Aby's and my former pew. Through Annie's fresh and amazed eyes I saw everything differently; no longer the smoke, flames, stench, and buildings destroyed. It was a journey of discovery for both of us.

Next morning, we walked to Will and Elenor's house. Will greeted me at the door with a cry of welcome and a hug. Then, over my shoulder, he saw Annie, with James peeping out behind her cloak. It took a moment for him to recognize them. Releasing me, he called to Elenor and with a huge smile embraced Annie and pulled her and James into the house. When we were all seated, I told them that Elenor's intuition had been right.

"What is more, I have to tell you that I have asked Annie to be my wife and, bless her, she has accepted."

Both Will and Elenor jumped to their feet. Elenor hugged Annie, and Will shook my hand. James, thumb in mouth, looked on with his big brown eyes wide open. Exclamations of pleasure and congratulations were followed by questions.

"When? Where? Where do you plan to live? Oh! Is that why you wanted me to let P. know?"

We were all laughing, even James. Talk teetered from topic to topic until we realized that Annie, with James, and Elenor would be best served by having their own conversation. Will and I decided to go out into the garden out of earshot. He wanted to know the details of what he called my "inevitable capitulation." After that was discussed, he asked what had happened to my ear and what caused the scar on my face. So we talked about the pirate encounter.

“Isaac, when Aby died you ceased writing your journal. Quite understandable. But over the past two years you have continued to have the most extraordinary adventures. A long time ago, you wrote and told me that you intended to restart writing your journal. Please, will you do so?”

I admitted that I had already done so, including a report on the Malaga trip for the Admiralty Court.

“How fascinating. All the more reason for you to record it all in writing. Please send everything to me for safekeeping. I can’t wait to read it.”

Annie and I had to discuss wedding arrangements, so we left to walk to the rectory, where we were met with another noisy and happy welcome. Mrs. White was quick to take Annie and James under her wing, leaving P. and me to talk in his study. Before I had time to bring up marriage, P. told me that he had a note for me from Richard Bushrode. Opening it, I read:

*Isaac, the Vice-Admiralty Court, Devon, requires a deposition from you with respect to the recapture of the Sweet Rose. You are required to return to Plymouth immediately, with all speed. There is a sloop, the Swallow, at Weymouth ready to transport you.*

*Richard B.*

I showed the note to P.

“You had better move and quickly. We will look after Annie and James. I am sure she will provide us with all the news.”

He clearly had an inkling of what we wanted but was prepared to wait on that. I went to the kitchen and told Annie of my summons to the Court. Mrs. White said that Annie and James would stay at the rectory till my return. I bid a fond farewell to my family, promising to return within a few days, and hurried back to the Sun to inform Jeremiah of our change in plans and to fetch Maddie. Within thirty minutes of reading Richard’s note we were on the road to Weymouth. By 11:00 I was on board the *Swallow*. We sailed immediately under a young captain, Ned Sampson.

## — CHAPTER 10 —

### Journal entry—October 1622

The *Swallow*, a sloop, was the fastest vessel on which I had ever sailed. It had been a pirate ship, said to have been built in Holland. The design was based on the Dutch jaght, a small, highly maneuverable sailing ship built to hunt pirates in coastal waters. Captured by the pirates it hunted, it had been recaptured a short time before. Smaller than *Rosie*, about 30 tons compared to *Rosie*'s 120 tons, the *Swallow* had a water-line length of about 50 feet, a single mast with a long bowsprit, and a good keel with a large rudder. She carried a lot of sail—rigged fore and aft, gaffed main, jib, stays'l, and jib tops'l. She sailed much closer to the wind than did *Rosie*. I asked Ned why.

“A fore and aft rig allows the wind to help pull the boat through the water rather than push the boat, as is the case with a square rigger.”

“How so?”

Ned took a spoon and told me to hold it vertically downwards with the tip of my fingers at the top of the handle. He picked up a jug of water and began pouring it out in steady stream. He told me to gently move the spoon into the stream so the curved side entered the water first. I expected the spoon to be pushed away by the stream of water, but in fact, it was sucked further in. He increased the rate of flow of the water. The spoon moved even more strongly into the stream. He explained, “What applies in water also applies in air. The

air over the back of the sails is like the stream of water. The sail is the spoon.”

I was soon bewitched by *Swallow*. I asked Ned who owned her. He thought it was currently in the possession of Plymouth Fort. Who did he work for? He said he was a fisherman, turned occasional customs man or skipper for hire when they needed extra resources, such as to come and fetch me. *Swallow* had been armed, when captured, with six cannon, extraordinary for such a relatively small boat. Not built for trading, but there was room enough without the cannon, as she was now configured. It set me thinking. It was an exhilarating sail, and we arrived at Sutton Pool only ten hours after leaving Weymouth—amazing. I thanked Ned for the ride. He laughed. Obviously he too had enjoyed himself.

Once ashore, rather than go home to an empty house, I went to the *Minerva*, where Alfred gave me a late supper and a bed. At the crack of dawn I went to the Fort. Captain Turner was already at his desk.

“Ah, Mr. Stanfield. You made good time. An officer of the Admiralty Court is standing by to take your deposition. I will send a message to him that you have arrived.”

Less than an hour later, the officer, a Navy lieutenant seconded to the Court, appeared with a clerk to take my dictation. Before doing so, I asked why the haste. The Vice-Admiral of the Court, Sir John Eliot, was exerting pressure to resolve the situation, which had been stalled for several weeks. My testimony was needed to determine the exact manner in which the *Sweet Rose* had been recaptured from the pirates. I told the officer what happened as succinctly as I could. He asked a number of questions. Had any of the *Sweet Rose* crew avoided capture by the pirates and helped me? Not that I was aware. Was I in any way a member of the crew? No, I was not a crew member; I was a merchant who was accompanying cargo that I owned, which was being transported to Plymouth. Did I have an ownership share in the *Sweet Rose*? I said no. Was there any possibility that the officers and crew of the *Sweet Rose* might have been able to recapture

her without my assistance? I said they seemed in no condition to do so, manacled and many dead or injured as they were. All my answers were written down. I then had to read through the deposition, correct any errors, and sign and date it. Captain Turner was asked to witness my signature. The officer thanked me and with his clerk left us. Captain Turner studied me without speaking.

“Captain Turner, you seem to have something on your mind. Out with it.”

“Mr. Stanfield. Do you realize the import of your account?”

I shook my head, puzzled.

“You told the Admiralty Court that the pirates captured the boat and its cargo. You, the cargo’s owner, recaptured the cargo and the boat, which did not belong to you. The owners lost their boat to pirates. A third party, you, captured the boat from the pirates. You saved your own cargo, so that still belongs to you. However, the boat and the treasure the pirates had transferred to the boat are deemed prizes and are thus, in the words of the Court, condemned.”

“Condemned?”

“To be sold and the proceeds paid less the Crown’s portion to the captor, you.”

“That’s a disaster. *Rosie* can’t be sold. The Skipper and Richard Bushrode own it.”

“They lost the boat to the pirates, . What happened subsequently doesn’t change the fact that they no longer own the boat.”

“How the hell do I stop them from selling off *Rosie*?”

“You will need to talk to the Vice-Admiral of the Court, Sir John Eliot.”

“Where is he? How do I get to see him?”

Captain Turner laughed. “Actually, he is currently staying at the home of Sir Ferdinando, where Mr. John Gorges is now in residence. Knowing the gist of the story about the capture, Mr. Gorges thought you might want to meet with Sir John. So he suggested that you send him a note requesting a meeting, at Sir John’s convenience.”

“Right.”

“I have a messenger here who will deliver the note, if you care to write it. I have quill and paper.”

I wrote the note, and it was dispatched. I told Captain Turner that I was going in search of Richard Bushrode, who had rented rooms in the Barbican. I found him having breakfast with a view over Sutton Pool. He had me sit and offered me a share of his repast, but I was too troubled to accept. I told him what had happened. He nodded soberly.

“Isaac, your rescue of the crew of the *Sweet Rose* was incredibly courageous. It showed daring and initiative of the highest order. I can’t congratulate you enough. If it hadn’t been for you, Captain Brown and the officers and crew would have been sold into slavery and ended their days on the Barbary Coast. Nothing else matters.”

“Richard, I understand what you are saying, but the *Sweet Rose* is Captain Brown’s livelihood. She’s like a daughter to him. He has no other family. It would destroy him to lose her.”

Taking another piece of toast, he asked, what did I propose? I didn’t know. I said that I had been advised to meet with Sir John Eliot but I didn’t know what to ask and how to ask it in a way to obtain a favorable response. He thought about my dilemma for a while.

“I don’t think Sir John wants to prolong this whole process. There needs to be a way he can be persuaded not to sell the *Sweet Rose*. Selling it enables him to take the Crown’s share of any prize adjudicated by the Admiralty Court. What can he be offered as an alternative?”

“A cash payment to match what the Court would have received out of the sale?”

Richard smiled and agreed. Both he and Captain Brown would be happy to give the cash to me if it meant I would take ownership of *Rosie*. It would be a small recompense for saving the life of the crew. But, he continued, “Sir John has been after John Nutt the pirate for the past two years. The pirates you captured, including the mate you stabbed, who incidentally didn’t die, are part of Nutt’s crew. It was Nutt who captured the *Sweet Rose*. It is possible you have given Sir John something much more valuable: access to Nutt.”

We were interrupted by a knock on the door. A messenger from Captain Turner delivered a note that requested I meet with Sir John Eliot at the Gorges residence. Richard wished me well. I told him I would return after my meeting and walked to 32 New Street, the Gorges residence in Plymouth. I was shown into the library where John Gorges and Sir John rose to meet me. Sir John—slim with dark eyes and a full pointed beard—reminded me of Prince Charles. He shook my hand warmly and told me he had taken great delight in learning from my deposition about my pirate adventure. However, he still had many questions and needed to know the full particulars.

“It seems you were lucky to escape with your life. Well done. John, here, has been telling me of some of your past exploits. What with capturing highwaymen, consorting in the New World with Indians, and so on, you have certainly led an exciting life.”

We talked more, and then Sir John asked me why I had wished to see him. He smiled as he said it.

“Well, Sir John. I’m afraid I am a total novice with respect to matters of state, so I’m on unsure ground. I now have some experience of pirates. I am a merchant as much as an adventurer. I hate pirates and the misery they cause.”

I told him about my first pirate encounter, when we damaged a pirate vessel on a trip back from La Rochelle, which had resulted in the Navy capturing it. I also covered my involvement with saving sailors ransomed to Spanish monks in Malaga. But mostly I expressed my thoughts about how West Country merchants could protect themselves in their legitimate coastal trading. This resulted in an hour of debate and discussion. Eventually Sir John admitted that my capture of the pirates had been a stroke of luck in his efforts to track down John Nutt. The mate whom I had stabbed had been persuaded to provide a wealth of details about Nutt’s movements and base of operations. Sir John was convinced that he now had the means to capture him. For that he owed me a significant debt of gratitude. I took this opening to raise the subject of the *Sweet Rose*. Sir John laughed.

“Between you and me, I’m tired of having any responsibility for



it. You captured it. You own it. Take it with my blessing. However, the pirate booty has significant value and the Crown will buy that treasure at fair price and award it to you less costs. The amount you should receive is approximately 1000 pounds.”

He said he had already prepared a document to that effect. It was my turn to laugh, and we shook hands.

“Mr. Stanfield. I have to tell you that I have thoroughly enjoyed our meeting. I wish you well and hope we have the opportunity to meet again soon.”

John Gorges accompanied me to the front door.

“Well done, Isaac. You approached him in exactly the right way. He is besotted with John Nutt and piracy. Between you and me, if he hadn’t liked you, there was an alternative document that ordered the *Sweet Rose* to be sold.”

I returned to Richard Bushrode and told him the good news. He suggested we visit Captain Brown on the *Sweet Rose*, which we could see from Richard’s window. A whistle from a dock worker, and *Rosie’s* boat came to pick us up. Soon we were in the Great Cabin, seated with a glass of wine, the Skipper and Richard toasting my new ownership. I acknowledged their toast and asked whether they knew anything about *Swallow*. It seemed her ownership was still in limbo. *Swallow* was not considered a merchant ship, so merchants weren’t interested. The Admiralty Court had passed the sloop on to the Fort to find someone to buy her. The customs service used *Swallow* occasionally but couldn’t afford to purchase her, and the navy wasn’t interested. I reminded the Skipper of our conversation about increasing our ability to defend ourselves against pirates by sailing with two ships with double the fire power. The Skipper said not to forget about doubling the cargo capacity as well. I told them I had sailed down from Weymouth on *Swallow*, and she was the fastest ship I had ever been on. Though designed for speed, she could carry some heavy weaponry. I suggested that the Skipper look *Swallow* over and see how she could be configured to carry a reasonable amount of cargo. Richard asked me where I was going with this.

I asked them both, “What would you say if I suggested you buy me *Swallow* in exchange for the *Sweet Rose*?”

They were silent. Then the Skipper said, “You can’t be serious. *Rosie* is worth significantly more than *Swallow*.”

Richard suggested, “Why don’t we visit *Swallow* and find out what the options might be. Remember, ultimately, Sir John Eliot will have final say on the ship’s sale. Isaac seems to have established a good relationship with him. That might stand us in good stead should we decide to proceed further with this idea.”

No time like the present: *Rosie*’s boat took us back ashore, and we walked over to *Swallow*, dockside. Ned was aboard supervising the crew’s cleaning and maintenance activities. *Swallow* looked immaculate. He invited us to join him and showed us over the boat. After an exhaustive inspection, we sat in the master cabin and Ned asked us what our interest was. I told him that I had been so impressed with *Swallow* that I had invited two of my friends to come and see the boat for themselves. We talked about her sailing characteristics under varying points of sail and weather conditions. At the Skipper’s request Ned described his sailing experience. Richard asked him what types of cargo he had carried. Ned admitted there had been little. However, while *Swallow* had limited capacity to carry cargo in the hold, she was quite beamy and with guns carried on the main deck, there was room on the lower deck to hold more cargo, given that the lower deck had been used to accommodate a large pirate crew, over twenty at times. We continued the discussion a while longer, then left with our thanks to Ned for being a gracious and knowledgeable host. He said he was standing by to return me to Weymouth, as instructed by the acting Governor, Mr. Gorges. He could leave as soon as I was ready.

I needed to set in motion the paperwork required to get *Rosie* back in action and to take the Malaga cargo out of bond. I told the Skipper and Richard that this was my highest priority. We could discuss *Rosie*’s ownership later. As far as I was concerned, they should continue to use her as they always had, until further notice. They

were unconvinced that they should make any short-term plans to use *Rosie*. I said the crew needed to be kept on and an idle boat was expensive to maintain. Richard laughed at my newfound owner's appreciation. He assured me that as soon as *Rosie's* current cargo was released by customs he had merchants ready to buy all of it, so not to worry on that score.

After I left them, I went to see Scroud to tell him the particulars. I gave him the details and the document I had received from Sir John Eliot. He said the transfer of ownership had to be registered and I to be licensed accordingly. As I was the owner of the cargo, which the manifest showed, he would see to the duty payments and arrange for the release. I told him I had to return to Weymouth. Under my instructions, he was to confirm in writing that Captain Brown remained Master of the *Sweet Rose* and was given unconditional usage for the next three months. I told him, in confidence, about my ideas with respect to *Swallow*. He made no comment as I had not reached any conclusion as far as he was aware. I returned to *Rosie* and informed the Skipper what I had asked Scroud to do. He was gratified. I asked him, in my absence, to have an expert do a thorough survey of *Swallow* to confirm the boat's soundness, ascertain the extent of her cargo-carrying potential, and what if any compromise would need to be made to her armament. I wanted to know the guns she could carry. With that I went to see John Gorges. I said I was intrigued about *Swallow*. I reminded him of my conversation with him and Sir John Eliot about pairing merchantmen to counteract pirate raids on coastal traders. I thought it possible *Swallow* might be just the thing, and I wanted a first option to purchase her. John said that he would make sure no one bought *Swallow* from under my nose and would let Sir John—whom he said would probably be delighted—know of my idea. I thanked him for making *Swallow* available for my return to Weymouth, which I was in some hurry to make.

We set off almost immediately. It was exciting to be able to sail wherever we wanted with hardly any regard to the wind direction. She tacked and pointed with minimum of fuss and great efficiency.

With the wind from the south, we tacked down the Sound before heading east on course for Weymouth with wind abeam and fresh. Ned was pleased to show me the log. We were on a beam reach travelling at nine knots through the water. I was like a schoolboy, thrilled at the sensation.

## — CHAPTER 11 —

### **Journal entry**—*October 1622*

It was late by the time *Swallow* tied up in Weymouth. We had left mid-morning and arrived in Weymouth around 9:00 p.m. I went to fetch Maddie from the Kings Arms and headed back to Dorchester, my mind full of the morning's meeting with Sir John. I thought about Ned Sampson, an impressive young man—a fine sailor and a cool-headed and competent leader. If I proceeded, I would want him as the *Swallow*'s Master. As to the crew, that was a matter that could wait, although I thought about hiring some of *Rosie*'s crew. Obi and J.B. sprang to mind, but I needed to think further about this without rushing into a decision I might regret.

What an extraordinary day it had been! Something like 36 hours or so ago, I was riding away from Dorchester, anxious about my summons to the Vice-Admiralty Court. I was now returning as the new owner of the *Sweet Rose* and already contemplating the acquisition of *Swallow* in exchange. But I needed to reset my thinking—Annie, James, and marriage. I rode back to Lower Burton and the Sun, as it was too late to disturb the rectory. There was a message for me from Sir F. He asked to see me in London as soon as possible. Damn, but I wasn't going to respond till I had been to see P. and discuss Annie's and my marriage.

Next morning, at the rectory, Annie was in the kitchen giving

James his breakfast and surprised to see me so early. Two nights away, and we greeted each other as if it had been a month. James ran to hug my leg. Mrs. White, who had come to the door to let me in, returned to her cooking. She bade us sit at the table. I picked James up and, with his little arms like a limpet round my neck, sat to hear Annie's news. We were interrupted by P. coming in.

"Good to see you back, Isaac. Sorry to interrupt, but I need to go out soon and will be away for most of the day. I have half an hour. I think you both need to talk to me, so come into my study."

I disentangled James from around my neck. Mrs. White, wiping her hands on her apron, took James' hand and told him that he could, if he was a good boy, help her make some bread. James, with a serious look on his face, turned to Annie.

"I'm a good boy, aren't I, Mummy?"

Annie agreed wholeheartedly, and we followed P. to his study. P. sat looking at us.

"Well?"

Annie and I held hands, and taking a deep breath, she said that we wanted to be married. P. leant back and beamed with delight.

"About time. Isaac has been all over the place, mind as well as body, for the past two years. Annie, I am so pleased you have managed to pin him down. I am happy for James, too."

I asked him what the process was and how quickly it might happen.

"That depends on what sort of wedding you want. I can marry you as soon as I have completed the banns cycle, which takes three Sundays. So, if I read the first this Sunday, October 16th, the third will be on the 30th. You could be married on the 31st. That's sixteen days from now. How does that suit you?"

We both nodded and laughed with sheer joy—just over two weeks, and we would be man and wife. We said we wanted the simplest of ceremonies. I recognized that for form's sake I needed to ask a friend, as yet unmarried, to be my best man—David Tremaine. Annie said she would ask her uncle Alfred Potts to give her away.

Will and Elenor would be witnesses. All seemingly settled, subject to confirmation, P. put the date on his calendar. After congratulations from Mrs. White, we left, carrying a sleepy James back to the Sun. On the way, I started telling Annie why I had hurried down to Plymouth and what I had been up to. I talked about *Swallow* and her role as a sister and support vessel to *Rosie* on trips in pirate waters. She asked a question that had not occurred to me.

“If *Swallow* was a much prized pirate boat, why would not pirates want to recapture her? Far from providing protection, wouldn’t she be a target for attack?”

That shut me up. I wanted to dismiss her remark as woman-talk, but after a minute’s thought, I accepted that she had a good point, which meant a reassessment was needed. Leaving that subject, I said I had received a summons from Sir Ferdinando to attend him in London as soon as possible. The two weeks’ wait to be married would allow me time to make a quick trip to London. Would she like to come with me?

“No, my darling man. I have no interest in smelly, crowded London. By yourself, you will be sooner up and back. I am developing a close friendship with Elenor and want to continue to do so. I wish to find out more about your Dorchester. Will has promised to take me back through your history. Go quickly, and be back soonest.”

Next morning, I left early to ride to London. Back in Clerkenwell, Sir F. said he had just received dispatches from John Gorges and Captain Turner. He congratulated me first on surviving the pirates’ attack, second on saving the ship and crew, and third on the beneficial (to me) outcome of the Admiralty Prize Court hearing.

“I find it difficult to keep up with all your adventures. It seems only yesterday you were a sixteen-year-old schoolboy fleeing the wrath and flames of a burning Dorchester. I can’t believe it has been nine years. You already have white hairs.”

I felt my scarred cheek and grinned, sheepishly. I diverted his attention by saying that Annie and I were to be wed. He jumped to his feet and shook my hand most heartedly and congratulated me

fulsomely. "About bloody time!" he exclaimed.

"Isaac, I do still have need of you. I am worried about the state of affairs in New England. Weston's men are turning out to be the rabble you warned me about. Thomas Morton went about his own business and has since returned to England. More about him when David Tremaine joins us. Reports back from New Plimouth tell me that the settlers there almost starved to death. Edward Winslow was able to get relief supplies from the fishermen in Damariscove last May. Hopefully David has more welcome news of Levett."

I shook my head and Sir F. threw up his hands. He said he didn't want to have to repeat everything when Tremaine appeared. Instead, he preferred to ask me exactly what happened on my trip from Malaga. He had my report but it clearly left out much. He wanted to know about my meeting with Sir John Eliot. Over wine we spent a pleasurable two hours in conversation. We dined alone as, sadly, Lady Mary was ill. I returned to the Old Mitre for the night with the expectation that Tremaine would be arriving tomorrow morning. In fact, there was a knock on my bedroom door soon after I had retired. It was David, and we sat and talked for a short while. I told him Annie and I were to be married and asked him to be my best man. He said he was pleased and honored.

Next morning, the meeting began with Sir F. detailing all that had happened with respect to New England over the past year. The New Plimouth Separatists had been issued with a land grant in June 1621. Sir F. had heard that Weston's settlers had arrived in New Plimouth in June, and after a difficult period the young men had decamped in September and moved up the coast to Wessagusset. The report he received said that they were barely able to look after themselves. The Separatists wanted nothing to do with them but felt obligated to support them as otherwise they would starve. Thomas Morton had reported back on his three-month exploratory trip. Weston's followers were an unruly rabble, and the Separatists were becoming intolerant of anyone's views but their own. Sir F. suspected it was more that Morton's views made him intolerant of them. Morton had



determined that a settlement was viable. He had found an ideal location, Passonagessit, not too far from Wessagusset and sufficiently far from New Plimouth. He was now planning to put together a group of young, capable men with the necessary skills to return to New England in 1624. Other land grants or options to buy were already awarded or in the process of being so, including ones to Thomson, Levett, and Bushrode.

David had been spending time with Captain Levett and reported that the Captain was determined to go to New England. He craved adventure and saw that longing being satisfied there. However, David was doubtful of Levett's reliability.

Sir F. informed us that the West Country fishing merchants had blocked the Council's efforts in Parliament and the Privy Council to raise revenue through taxing the fishing in New England—revenue needed to fund construction of a large boat of over 500 tons and named the *Great Neptune*, to serve both as a merchantman carrying supplies and settlers and a warship to defend the New England coast against foreign incursion. What was even more depressing, Sir F.'s original Council for New England membership was unsupportive of his efforts. It seemed that he was increasingly isolated. Sir F. admitted that his one last chance was to establish a stable government in New England. Under that disciplined control, with all the instruments of proper governance in place, he expected settlers and investors alike to overcome their fears and see the extraordinary opportunities that existed there. He stated that with the expectation that Robert would successfully establish law and order, Sir F. was planning to go to New England in 1624 on *The Great Neptune* with 200 settlers.

After the meeting David and I returned to the Old Mitre. We sat in a quiet corner of the bar room over drinks. I admitted how worried I was about Robert. David said that he had heard others in unguarded moments express doubts that Robert had the strength of character and discipline to achieve much. We talked about Lady Mary's illness. Apparently she was not expected to live much longer.

According to David, Sir F.'s financial affairs over the past thirty years had been tumultuous. His first wife, Lady Ann, had provided him with the resources to pay for the upkeep and manning of Plymouth Fort. That money spent, he was able to recoup some of his expenses by chartering privateers, which surprised me. Now he needed money to support his ambitions in New England. Lady Mary had provided him resources to do that. When she died, that source of funding would cease, her estate being willed to her children.

"Wait," I protested. "None of the money Sir Ferdinando spent was for his own account. He was funding state enterprises, for which he has not been reimbursed."

David held his hands up. "I know, I know. I was just telling you why he is so desperate. I have absolutely no understanding of why Sir Ferdinando continues to pauper himself repeatedly without the recognition and support he deserves from the Crown. Apart from that, the stress he is under would break most men."

I changed the subject to talk about *Swallow*. David said he knew of the vessel and had sailed on a similar one and been impressed. These sloops—maneuverable, fast, and small—were really built for close inshore work. Pirates deployed them in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. He was doubtful about using them as a supplemental trader doubling as an armed companion to *Rosie*. They were light displacement boats, which meant they were fragile. A broadside from even small cannon would wreak havoc. The relatively thin hull would provide no protection for the crew in any hostile engagement. Pirates tended to load them with a large amount of crew specifically to board and overpower their adversary. We talked into the small hours about the pros and cons of owning such a vessel. I mentioned the remark Annie had made about *Swallow* being a magnet for pirates. David nodded.

"I think Annie could well be right. On the other hand, if pirates think so highly of *Swallow*, perhaps she could be used against them in the manner they had used her. Worth thinking about."

The following day we rode together to Dorchester. David wanted

to meet Annie again, seeing as how he was to be best man. He thought it prudent to introduce himself to Reverend John White. The evening of our third day on the road we stayed at the George in Salisbury. We were sitting in the bar room after dinner when, in the course of conversation, I pressed David on his confirmed bachelor status. He admitted, sadly, to a deep desire to meet the right lady.

“David, not far from here lives a young widow who is a tenant farmer, attractive, and missing a husband and a father to her two children. In fact, we pass close by the farm tomorrow morning. I will introduce you.”

Next morning we rode to Kate Hardy’s farm. Davey and Beth were swinging on a gate as we approached. They shouted with glee when they saw me and came running up to us. Davey grabbed my stirrup, with Beth hanging on his arm. I lifted them both up onto Maddie. Kate came out of the house to investigate the noise. I dropped my passengers at her feet, jumped down, and gave her a big hug.

“Kate, I want you to meet a dear friend of mine, David Tremaine.”

With that, David dismounted, doffed his cap, took and bowed over Kate’s offered hand. They then stood looking at each other, seemingly mesmerized. I beckoned the children to me.

“Davey, Beth, come help me stable Maddie.”

I swept them back up onto Maddie, and we headed into the stable. David still held the reins to his mount, oblivious. I didn’t like to disturb him. We found Maddie a stall and then went to view the pigsty and its occupants. Just about to be fed by one of Kate’s farmhands, the pigs were raising a deafening noise, so we moved out to the pasture behind the stable. I leant against the rails while the children climbed up to sit on the top rail and told me the names and peculiarities of the cows in view. Some fifteen minutes later, we all walked back to the house. David was sitting at the kitchen table, and Kate was busy cooking. She looked up as we entered and grinned. I recognized the look and grinned back. David was watching us.

“Now you two. You are sending messages to each other. I have the distinct impression that you know each other rather too well.”

Kate and I looked at David in surprise and then glanced at each other. After a pause, Kate laughed. She turned to me. "Why, Mr. Stanfield, Mr. Tremaine here tells me you are returning to Dorchester to marry your long-time sweetheart. About time, as you will remember when we last saw each other something I told you to do, in no uncertain terms."

Then she turned to David.

"Mr. Tremaine, as I'm sure you have long been aware, Mr. Stanfield has been lackadaisical about coming to terms with his love for Annie. He needed a sharp kick up his bum, which I was happy to provide."

David begged pardon for any implication in his previous remark, and Kate graciously accepted his apology. Pretending to find the children totally engrossing, I left Kate and David to chat. After some time, though, I grew eager to return to my own love.

"Kate, I hate to be inconvenient, but I have urgent business to attend to in Dorchester. I must be on my way."

David, loath to leave, rose reluctantly to his feet. Kate, her back to David, glared at me while speaking sweetly.

"Of course, Isaac. Thank you so much for dropping by. I am sorry to see you both go. Please do come again."

Her voice was all charm, but her face showed stronger emotion. I gave her a peck on the cheek and left, hand in hand with Davey and Beth. David and Kate lingered. Soft words were spoken, and they followed us out. It was not until we were back on the road to Woodyates that I turned to David.

"Well?"

He grinned ruefully. "That was not a hearth I wanted to leave."

"So you like her?"

"You know damn well I do."

"From the signals I picked up, I rather think she is interested in you, too."

"Isaac, I thank you for introducing us. I have never had such an immediate, positive reaction on first meeting a lady. I have been

made to feel I would be welcome should I wish to return. I can ask no more than that. Now to Dorchester.”

We rode in friendly silence for some time, each with his thoughts. Mine were on Annie. I could guess where David’s were. At one point on a long grassy track, David released his feelings with a whoop. He kicked his mount and cantered away, full of joy. I shouted in encouragement and Maddie leapt to catch up. The breakaway soon became a mad gallop. A sharp turn in the road by a gate in the hedgerow, directly ahead of us. David attempted to clear it but was unseated, falling into a large patch of nettles and cowpats. Maddie cleared the gate and we came up to the riderless horse, who had stopped to graze. We walked back to David, oblivious of the nettles and the dung, lying on his back with an expression of someone who had found a reason to love life.

At the Sun, mid-afternoon, Jeremiah was pleased to welcome us. In the stable yard, after he washed off the worst of the smell, David, to my satisfaction, was offered a room of his own. I suggested he settle himself in while I made the initial rounds. I would be back in an hour or two. David said he was going to have a nap and I should take my time. I set off for the rectory. Annie was in the kitchen when Mrs. White brought me in. James was just up from an afternoon sleep. He came to me rubbing his eyes, and I lifted him into my arms. He wrapped his arms round my neck and hugged me. Annie, with a sweet, welcoming smile, came to me and we all embraced together, Mrs. White watching with approval. I had been away just over a week. It was now 24 October, seven days till our wedding. While Mrs. White looked after James, I spirited Annie away to the garden to have some quiet time with her. After a long, long embrace, we locked eyes and silently shared our thoughts. Annie’s fingertips reached up and trickled through my beard. She traced the marks on my face, studying each line. A frown crossed her face.

“Isaac, you have had too many close escapes. You have been extraordinarily lucky and, yes, skillful—but mostly lucky. Each of your adventures could have resulted in your death, even back to 1613 and

the Dorchester fire. Will let me read your journal, and those episodes are all fixed in my mind. I want you to live, to be my husband, the father of our children. I have waited for what seems an eternity for us to be married and settled.”

I frowned. Then, as she drew back, I hastened to say that I wanted what she wanted with all my heart, but I had made a commitment to Sir Ferdinando to accompany Robert Gorges to New England to see him safely established as Governor. Although Sir F. had asked me to pledge to an unlimited amount of time over there, I promised Annie that I would stay only a few months.

“Isaac, my sweet. I have no right to tell you what you should do. You are important to many people with respect to your business affairs. These are your obligations and responsibilities. You know firsthand about New England as much as anyone. You are becoming a successful merchant, which requires you to travel. With travel there are risks. But do be careful, not impetuous—you are no longer a blithe teenager but a grown man with a family to cherish. Please promise me only that you will be prudent.”

I smiled and promised. We kissed, and then I told her all that had happened on my trip to London. Annie listened as I spoke but really came alive when I described David’s meeting with Kate and what it appeared to augur. She looked thoughtful. I should have recognized the danger signs but instead went merrily on, saying how attractive Kate was and how they were so well suited.

“I don’t know Kate. Is this an old friend of yours? You seem to know her exceeding well.”

“Ah, no. A friendship that came about by accident.”

She asked me the details, and I told her. After a brief but telling silence, Annie reminded me that we had all been invited to lunch at the rectory. Annie, James, and I walked to the Sun to fetch David. David and Annie met like the old friends they were. I had forgotten that David had expressed a fancy for Annie many years previously. We enjoyed lunch, presided over by P. He had not met David before, and they sat next to each other deep in conversation, while I bantered

with James and the ladies.

The week went quickly. I received a report from the Skipper and Richard Bushrode regarding *Swallow*. They had enlisted a shipwright to work out how to improve her cargo-carrying capacity. The reasons she was such a fine sailer were why she could not carry substantial cargo. The hold was tight, good for storage of *Swallow*'s gear, munitions, and provisions, but not for heavy stowage. The lower deck provided space, but the weight of the cargo would upset the balance of the boat. She would roll in moderate seas, losing her speed and maneuverability. *Swallow* was designed for a purpose. To change her to fulfil another purpose would result in neither purpose being achievable. I showed the report to David. He shook his head.

"Pity. I know how much you loved sailing in her. But good that you received the advice you did from the people who know. A fine boat but of little practical value to a merchant trader."

I sighed. My heart desired her, but my head said no. I wrote back to Richard and the Skipper, thanking them for the effort they had put into surveying *Swallow*. Rather than mix up the ownership of *Rosie* with the purchase of another boat, I suggested they consider I share an equal partnership with each of them in the holding of *Rosie*. We could always seek out another suitable vessel to make the Malaga run with us. I sent a note to John Gorges, thanking him for allowing me the pleasure to experience *Swallow* and telling him that, sadly, I no longer had an interest in buying her.

The 31st of October arrived as a late and warm summer's day. The trees were turning to reds and browns. Bonfires burning brush and leaves fragranced the air. The harvest was in; the wheat fields brown with stubble or already being tilled. Wispy mares' tails of clouds high in the pale blue sky hinted of changing seasons.

The wedding ceremony was meant to have been a small affair. With the banns being read over the past three Sundays and Annie's presence for two weeks in Dorchester captivating everyone she met, Holy Trinity was full, work day regardless. Alfred had sent a sorrowful note to say he could not attend. His duties forbade, but he

expressed his love and best wishes. Annie had no interest in inviting any of the rest of her family. Why, I wondered? I was too happy in the moment to question her but resolved to understand this seeming estrangement at some point.

Will offered to give Annie away, with Elenor the matron of honor. David appointed James as his assistant ring-bearer. So all was organized, and all went well. We made our vows to each other and exchanged rings. Annie, radiant, came into my arms and we kissed. The congregation, instigated by P., rose to its collective feet and cheered. Pigeons in the rafters took fright with messy revenge on certain unfortunates below. Jeremiah had prepared a wedding feast. The wedding party, with the congregation following, walked in celebration and highly festive mood back to Lower Burton and the welcoming Sun. It was late before the last guests had wended their weary way home. James, in a back bedroom away from the noise, slept soundly through it all. Annie and I, at last alone, celebrated our first night together as husband and wife.



## — CHAPTER 12 —

### **Journal entry**—*November 1622*

A few days later, Annie, James, and I left Dorchester on Tess and Maddie. We rode in the company of fellow travelers to Plymouth, returning the way we had come. The weather remained benign, and Annie and I talked about the future as we rode. I asked her if we should consider buying our own house instead of continuing to rent. Annie said no. She saw 15 Whimple Street as her home now and had too many strong feelings about it to let it go. Perhaps in a year or two she might feel differently. That got us on to the subject of children.

“Isaac, my love, I want your children more than anything. Even with several more children, it will be a while before we might consider the house to be too small.”

The idea of many more children set me thinking. The manner and frequency of our lovemaking made the likelihood of children highly probable. I wanted to make sure there was help in the house so Annie would not become overwhelmed.

I met with Skipper and Richard. They had my note and had been awaiting my return to discuss it with me. They insisted that *Rosie* now belonged to me. If I was seriously considering entering into a partnership with them, they would be pleased to negotiate an agreement. I said I was in mind to offer each of them a third share. Richard said that would be generous and suggested that my business agent,

Ebenezer Scroud, and his own, representing Captain Brown and himself, be retained to prepare the agreement. The market value of the *Sweet Rose* would be determined by an independent marine assessor. At their insistence, we all signed a memorandum, which Richard quickly wrote out, detailing the agreement to be negotiated. I shook hands with them both. To my surprise, Skipper, as he took my hand, said that there was no way he could express his gratitude to the extent deserved. However, he would take it as an honor if we could all be on first-name terms. Richard laughed and joined hands with us.

“So, to an unholy threesome: Isaac, Isaiah, and Richard.”

After a glass to toast the partnership, we reverted to business. I had already informed them that Sir John Eliot had returned full ownership of the cargo to me and only the pirates’ treasure had been taken by the Crown to calculate its share. The cargo brought back from Malaga had been sold with a significant profit. Richard and Isaiah said the cargo was entirely mine and I should take 100 percent of the net. That was too much for me. I was able to insist we keep to the original agreement, 75 percent of the net. We then talked about the risks of continuing to ply the Malaga route. Richard was concerned about the increasing incidence of pirates. They were becoming more and more brazen. It seemed that the sale of Christian captives, from land or sea, into slavery provided them with substantial returns. The risks to the investor were bad, but to the crew of the captured trader the risks of torture and death were terrible. Isaiah said that he had been talking to his fellow skippers, and the feeling among the seamen was that they would require significant “danger” wages and even then would be loath to sail the Malaga route. Major increases in crew wages would reduce the return on investment. Still, we had found a lucrative trading partner in Malaga. I suggested we do some research to find out if we could persuade anyone to join with us in another voyage there. The *Mary Evans* out of Bristol was a possibility. Isaiah said he would drop a note to Captain Morris. In the meantime, we agreed to keep our eyes and ears open for other potential partners.

I met with Scroud a few days later. I was now well on the way to reducing my ownership of *Rosie* to a one-third share. The assessor had found the boat sound despite its age of 15 years. The normal active life for a barque such as *Rosie* was on average 20 years. He had established a value of £420 for the bare boat and a further £200 for the armaments and other accessories. An agreement had been drafted, and a copy was being delivered to Captain Brown and Mr. Bushrode by their business agent. After the necessary fees, duties, and sundry expenses, I would receive about £200 from each. Scroud permitted himself a few mild words of approval.

“Mr. Stanfield, whatever your reasons were for selling two thirds of the *Sweet Rose*, I have to tell you that it was an astute transaction. Profit margins to boat owners are paper thin, and the owners carry huge risks, as you have experienced. You have been able to liquidate most of a significant but short-term asset. The *Sweet Rose* generates little net income, and because of its age will continue to depreciate rapidly over the next few years.”

Although I wasn't entirely sure that I followed him, I thanked him for his approbation.

“Moreover, Mr. Stanfield, your net return on the cargo you brought back from Malaga looks likely to be an additional 100 pounds or more, further demonstrating the relative benefits of being a merchant trader over a boat owner. As to the pirate's treasure, we shall see what transpires.”

We then turned to domestic matters. I asked him to use extreme tact in approaching the owner of 15 Whimble Street to find out whether there was any interest in selling the property. Scroud said that if we had plans to substantially enlarge our family and hire a live-in servant to help Mrs. Stanfield, the house might not be large enough. However, he would proceed on several fronts with suitable delicacy.

Annie, meantime, was deeply engaged in redesigning our home. She had drawn outlines of each room showing potential alterations to our advantage. After James was in bed and we had supped, we sat at

the kitchen table with a final glass of wine going through her plans. As we were only renting the house, however, I was not prepared to invest a large amount of money in converting it, assuming the owner would even allow the changes. Annie was disappointed but quick to see my point of view. I told her that Scroud was making discrete enquiries about available property. I didn't admit that he was sounding out our landlord.

### **Journal entry—December 1622**

In early December I met with Scroud in his office for a report on his property search. He said owners did not want to move residence in the winter, but a number of houses would become available in the spring. He had looked for houses substantially larger than 15 Whimble Street. However, he had talked to the business agent of our landlord. As it happened, the gentleman, a widower, was planning to sell the house. A granddaughter, much beloved, was getting married to a Tavistock man. The wedding was planned for April 1623, and the owner wanted to provide a handsome dowry, which sale of the house would provide. The asking price was £265. Scroud suggested that if I wished to proceed, I should leave the negotiations to him. I told him that I would discuss this opportunity with my wife and we would tell him what we had decided in the next day or two.

“Mr. Stanfield. There is no hurry. The gentleman has been advised that there is a potential buyer. He has promised to keep the house off the market until the new year.”

I returned to Annie. After dinner we sat at the table sifting through the plans she had made and continued to alter. She had begun to tire of the exercise as she assumed that little could be done with a rented accommodation. Teasing, I asked her to tell how she would design the second-floor attic space. To humor me she pulled out a drawing and started describing it.

“How about the cellar? Could it be used for anything else?”

She started to talk about the cellar, then stopped and stared at me.

“Isaac, you are looking too innocent. Why are you making me discuss these plans?”

I opened my eyes wide.

“Me, innocent? What do you mean?”

She looked at me shrewdly, then screwed up her face, closing one eye and biting her lower lip. I laughed at her expression.

“I have been to see Scroud.”

She clapped her hands, jumped to her feet, and sat on my lap with her arms around my neck.

“We can buy the house?”

“Yes, my love. If that is what you really want.”

“Of course! But before we do, we need to make sure that what we want to do with it can actually be done. We must talk to a builder. And it just so happens that I know one. At least Uncle Alfred does. He uses him at the Minerva.”

We went for a long ride on James’ third birthday and to his delight stayed at the Minerva for the night on our return. His adored and adoptive great-uncle Alfred provided a splendid birthday supper, and we were given the best bedroom in the house. We ate well, slept better, and enjoyed being pampered.

Sadly, we received a note from John Gorges that his stepmother had died some weeks previously. It had been a long and painful illness. We had met on occasions since the Prize Court hearing, and I went to see him. John was sad for his father but said he hadn’t really known Lady Mary, some 20 years younger than Sir F. John felt it had been a marriage of convenience, but I sensed that he had always been uncomfortable about having a stepmother of much the same age as himself. I sent a letter of condolence to Sir F. from Annie and me.

We received a note from Will that Elenor had borne a brother for Mary, named William after father and grandfather, on 6 December, James’ birthday. All were doing well. We sent our congratulations, noting the auspicious date for birthdays. The days leading up to Christmas were spent in exciting but sometimes stressful bustle.

Annie was keen to have her builder confirm her plans, instantly. He was methodical and thorough, however, and refused to be rushed, which frustrated her. Still, she threw herself into preparations for Christmas, our first one together since Aby died. Annie had a host of friends in Plymouth and very much wanted Annie, James, and me to be a part of their festivities. The house was decorated, the yule log found and brought back, pulled by Tess with James sitting astride the log, shouting and laughing. Wassailing in the evenings and carols in church—it was a memorable Twelve Nights.

### **Journal entry—*January 1623***

Annie and I had a quiet and intimate celebration of my 26th birthday on 6 January. As we lay in bed she whispered in my ear that she had asked Sarah Winstanley to come and see her the previous day. I tried to remember who Sarah Winstanley was but said nothing. I was exhausted from our prolonged lovemaking and content to have Annie's softness all about me.

"I asked her to examine me."

"Why would she do that?"

"Shush and listen."

Annie then told me exactly what Sarah did, which made me pay a great deal of attention. I remembered then who Sarah was—the midwife.

"At the end of her examination, she told me I was three months pregnant."

I jumped out of bed. I threw another log on the fire and hastened to get a bottle of wine. I was elated, saying "A child, a child, a sister for James. No! A brother, maybe one of each." Annie lay back in bed watching me, delighted at my reaction. Then I started doing the sums.

"That means you conceived in early October." I thought back. "Cods and eels! It must have been the night that I proposed to you."

Annie laughed. She said she had worked that out too. It had certainly been a night to remember. I continued to do my calculations.

“The baby will be born in early July. That’s about when I will be in New England. Damn.”

Annie pulled me back into bed and put her arms round me.

“Don’t worry. The next few months you will be here. After that, husbands tend to get in the way. Expectant mothers become focused on the nest they are making for their new chick. You really do not want to be around for the birth or for the first few weeks afterwards. You would probably be a distraction. My attention will be entirely on our new baby.”

I asked if she had any apprehensions about the birth. She laughed.

“Not now. It is all I could wish for, your child growing inside me.”

The next week was spent with Annie’s builder going through the plans, finding out what was possible, and at what cost. Annie wanted the modifications completed by June, and we hadn’t even bought the house yet. The builder, Enoch Trundle, put together a detailed estimate. He said the reconstruction would take 3 months at a cost of £65. To complete by June, he would need to start in early March. We had 2 months for Scroud to complete the purchase negotiations. Meanwhile, I received a note from Sir F. requesting my presence in Clerkenwell. Annie was engrossed in the house, her pregnancy, and James. I was hardly missed when I rode up to London.

— CHAPTER 13 —

**Journal entry**—*January 1623*

After a night at the Old Mitre, I went early to see Sir F. He welcomed me into the library, where we sat in front of a roaring fire with mulled wine warming our hands. I expressed my condolences for Lady Mary's passing. He talked briefly and movingly about her. Then, without further preamble, he told me that the leader of the men Thomas Weston had picked to go to New England had abandoned them at Wessagusset and returned to England. The rabble, as Morton had described them, had little food and had taken to bartering everything they had with the Indians to get more. They had also taken to selling arms to the Indians, which the Council had strictly forbidden. Factions developed, and desertions mounted. Some of the men left to return individually to New Plimouth or up to Damariscove and Monehegan looking for a boat to take them home. Weston was anxious to go over there and planned to leave as soon as he could. Sir F. was highly concerned. Weston was not a leader who could be trusted to manage the men or provide some degree of administrative organization.

“We could have a full-scale disaster on our hands. Out-of-control bands of settlers forming their own relationships with the Indians, possibly good but much more likely bad. Thefts on either side could provoke a massacre. The New Plimouth settlers have been trying hard to cultivate good relations with the Indians and, more



important, gain their respect. Weston's men are giving the worst possible example."

"Sir Ferdinando, have you met Roger Conant? No? He has been trying to persuade Thomas Weston to take him and his wife and child to New England. I strongly suspect he will go with Weston when he leaves, if not before. May I suggest you meet with him and form your own judgement as to whether or not he might have the necessary capabilities to bring order to the Wessagusset settlement? I have met him, and he seems to be sensible, with a strong character. He and his family could provide an example of stability for the young men."

Sir F. asked me to bring Roger Conant and his wife to meet him. We then discussed the impending departure of Robert Gorges and his party. He would take subordinates responsible for bringing the fishermen into line and for establishing a strong church governance, religious presence, and oversight. They planned to leave in early July at the latest. They were still recruiting the men and, as yet, had not found a vessel for the voyage. I was surprised, and it showed. Sir F. with some impatience admitted that finances were now tight. He was throwing everything he had into making sure that his son's mission was a success, but he was concerned whether it would be enough. I was needed to bolster Robert's morale and keep him focused on the tasks at hand.

A few days later, I brought Mr. and Mrs. Conant to meet with Sir F. He was well taken with them both. He asked them to take on the role of managing the Wessagusset settlement under Thomas Weston, and they agreed. I returned to Plymouth to put my affairs in order and to see Robert, who was to be in town for a few days.

### **Journal entry—*February to March 1623***

I had been away three weeks. In that time, Scroud had reached agreement on the purchase of 15 Whimple Street for £225. I was happy to sign the papers with immediate effect. Trundle, our builder, began work almost immediately, and we decided to move to the Minerva.

Annie spent part of each day at the house to supervise the renovations, being on hand to resolve every issue that came up and to maintain an account book of all the expenditures. I was in awe of her management skills and left her to it.

I spent several days at the Fort with Robert Gorges. I heard from Sir F. that the Conants had taken paid passage on a fishing vessel with a small number of settlers, sailing directly to New Plimouth. Separately, Robert told me that his father had reported that Thomas Weston was in serious trouble. He had been contracted to take a number of cannon to New England to help fortify the settlements there. Instead, Weston sold the ordinance in France and kept the proceeds. The authorities were after him, but he had escaped in disguise and was thought to be sailing for New England. Ahead of Robert Gorges' departure, a letter was sent to David Thomson in Pannaway requesting him to seize Weston and hold him until Robert could get there to deal with him. Robert was concerned about the possible outcome. I told him that the situation had great merit from his perspective. What could be better than an arriving Governor to be seen dealing quickly, justly, and severely with a felon—a splendid example for the settlers to heed. With some difficulty Robert was persuaded to my point of view. Each day I spent with Robert I felt more and more uncomfortable, a sense of foreboding that I tried to shake off before returning to the *Minerva* each evening.

### **Journal entry—*April 1623***

In mid-April Sir F. asked for me and David Tremaine to attend him at Wraxall. Robert was also there. Matters in New England were tense. The house at Wessegusset had been largely abandoned and most of Weston's supporters scattered to the four winds. Weston's men, at least those still there, were close to starvation, such that they had become totally dependent on the local Indians. We were informed that the Indians had treated these woeful young Englishmen

with contempt, even torturing some of them to death. There was a fear that the Indians, so emboldened, would attack New Plimouth. On order from William Bradford, Captain Standish gathered a small resolute band of armed settlers to clear the Indians from the house. The mission was quick and brutal, with Standish and his men killing three of the leaders. Two heads were mounted on pikes on the walls of the house, and the remaining head was brought back to the now fortified New Plimouth plantation and stuck above the stockade gate. This had the adverse effect of terrifying all Indians, so none would come to the fort, even to trade.

“But what about Tisquantum?” I asked. “He has been working to bring Massasoit and his Indians into an alliance with the settlers.”

“Sadly, I have just received word that he fell ill in November and died shortly afterwards. Bradford reports that the circumstances were suspicious, but nothing could be proved. It appears that Tisquantum was weaving a tangled web of intrigue and Massasoit was beginning to distrust him. At one point Captain Standish had to go with an armed party to rescue him from his Indian companions before they killed him. Bradford was beginning to distrust his motives. When Tisquantum died, his body was retrieved and buried in the New Plimouth cemetery.”

I felt huge sadness and thought back to when I had first met Tisquantum in Malaga. How he had suffered when he returned to his homeland to find his family and friends all wiped out. I wondered aloud what had happened to Samoset.

“No word from Bradford. Samoset had not been seen at New Plimouth for a while. It’s assumed he moved back north.”

I asked about the Conant family, but Sir F. had been given no information other than that they had arrived in New Plimouth. With the Weston settlement now in total disarray, I wondered what would happen to them. I was concerned enough about Robert Gorges’ questionable abilities to ask Sir F. what he thought about the current situation in New Plimouth. He studied me without speaking for an uncomfortable moment.

“Isaac, you have something on your mind. Out with it.”

I had to be careful with Robert being present.

“Well, sir, I understand it is imperative to establish a strong governing structure in New England. We must provide the stability and order necessary to attract settlers and investors. It seems to me that New Plimouth has such a governing structure. It has demonstrated it can survive. It has strong leaders in Bradford and Standish, capable of maintaining law and order. Would it not be an option to build on that beginning?”

“In part you are right, Isaac. However, the Separatists are focused on their own settlement and its long-term self-sufficiency. Their brand of religious fervor does not make them particularly attractive to investors. We have other settlements that we have every expectation will be successful—Morton’s, Thomson’s, Levett’s, and so on.”

I nodded and was silent. He continued.

“It is not as if we are asking Robert to do something beyond his capability. He is a successful army officer. He will have experienced officers to support him. You will be there to advise him. All he has to do is convince the settlers of his right and capability to govern on behalf of the Council. It is the Council who has granted them the land that they are settling, so this should not be too difficult. He has to convince the fishermen that the Council has the right to control fishing in New England waters. This right of the Council can only be to the benefit of the West Country fishermen whom David has been so assiduously wooing. Then there is the religious component. There is currently no ordained minister administering to the settlers and fishermen, not even at New Plimouth. Nor has there been any attempt to bring Jesus Christ to the Indians. We must establish a spiritual presence with the necessary authority to secure a civil and Christian society. Robert is taking the men with him who are capable of meeting these objectives.”

My doubts I kept to myself.

“Aye, sir. Could we get an update on Captain Levett and his plans?”

David told us that Levett's plan was to sail to New England in the late summer. He had already recruited a number of capable men and was continuing to do so. As far as David was aware, Levett intended to head for David Thomson's settlement at Pannaway. Once there, he would explore the coastline north. Sir F. turned to Robert.

"This fits with our plans for your move to New England. You should head for Thomson's settlement as well. Once there, you should enlist Levett and Thomson as members of your governing council. They will provide real substance as you establish your administration."

David and I nodded in agreement. Sir F. continued.

"We have already determined that Robert and his party will leave Plymouth in July to be in New England by the beginning of September at the latest. However, we have yet to arrange suitable transport. The most cost effective solution will be for Robert and his party to find passage on a fishing or trading vessel. That is in hand."

We discussed Thomas Morton. It was clear that he was not yet ready to return to New England. He had work to do to build his team, find sponsors, and gather supplies. There appeared no likelihood that he would be leaving by the end of the year. The next morning, I was to return to Plymouth and David to ride to London. We spent the day and evening together in good fellowship enjoying Wraxall's hospitality. I asked after Kate. David said they wrote to each other and were in regular contact. He had been to Woodyates several times. Everything appeared to be moving along smoothly.

"Moving along, where?"

David grinned. "Kate is the most desirable woman. However, she is a committed farmer. She is not prepared to forsake the land to follow an itinerant traveler like me. I have to decide whether or not I am ready to settle down to become a farmer. Meantime, we enjoy our time together, as often as I can be there."

"How about the children?"

"Davey and Beth have begun calling me DeeDee."

"DeeDee?"

“Daddy David.”

“So, where are you in your deliberations about the farming life?”

“I am a sailor by training. I became an agent for Sir Ferdinando I now see a likely end to my employment with him planning to move to New England next year. If he doesn’t go, it will be because Robert has failed. If that happens, I believe Sir Ferdinando will be forced to cease his engagement in New England, in which case he will go to ground to lick his wounds and there will be little for me to do. So either way it looks like 1624 is going to be the time I make my decision.”

“Does Kate know this?”

“Not as clearly as I have laid it out to you. But it has only become plain to me with the meeting we have just had with Sir Ferdinando and Robert. I have to tell you, Isaac, even with your active support in New England, I don’t believe Robert has a clue about what is in store and does not have the pioneering spirit to rough and tough it out.”

I couldn’t help but agree. Next morning I set off for Plymouth. With only three months to go before I departed for New England with Robert, I had much to think about. I was in a mixed frame of mind. I wanted to return to New England. I was looking forward to seeing David and Amyes Thomson again, as well as my old Indian friends. I loved the country and its boundless opportunities. But helping to assure Robert’s success would be a difficult process. I had promised only a few months of my time, but I doubted that was a realistic prospect. I was concerned that I had given Annie the wrong expectation.

I rode Maddie hard, and we were back in Plymouth and the Minerva by late evening. James was in bed, and Annie was helping Alfred in the busy bar. I slipped in and sat at a corner table, unseen by Annie. I watched her in her old employment and enjoyed the easy relationship she had with so many of the regulars. At one point she passed my table with a fist full of tankards. With hardly a glance, she addressed me.

“And what would be your pleasure, sir?”

“How about I bed you?”

“Cheeky!”

People laughed. Annie turned suddenly, reacting late to the sound of my voice, and her eyes widened when she saw me. She put down the tankards, leant across the table, and gave me a huge kiss, her lovely breasts clinging to her low-cut bodice. People cheered.

“Isaac, my sweet. You will have to wait.”

## — CHAPTER 14 —

### **Journal entry**—*May 1623*

Sir F. had appointed Captain Turner to oversee the preparations for Robert's departure. He was to find a suitable vessel and acquire the necessary supplies. He had a list of the people who would be accompanying Robert, the hierarchy and command structure, their roles and titles. He was a good staff officer and relished the responsibility. Once they got to New England, it would be in Robert's hands. Captain Turner would do everything in his power to provide an efficient, well-ordered platform upon which the new Governor of New England could build a successful completion to his mission. He could do no more. But finding transportation was becoming a problem. That meant I could spend the majority of my time with Annie and James.

Trundle was true to his word, and work on the house proceeded according to plan and budget. New furniture had been ordered, and the final decorating and painting were completed by the end of May. We planned to move back in on 1 June. We had a discussion about baby names. If we had a boy, Annie wanted to name him after Alfred. I wasn't so sure. I thought David was a fine name. We agreed to differ as there was still plenty of time. If we had a girl, Annie insisted she be called Abigail. I felt that would be unfair on Annie. As much as I loved the name, we needed to let Aby rest in peace.

"No, my love. She will be called Abigail, not Aby. I loved Aby and



have no concerns about remembering her through the name.”

So, there the matter rested.

### **Journal entry—*June 1623***

Annie finally began to slow down. With a month to go before her confinement she started to heed the protestations of Sarah Winstanley. Mine had long been ignored. The house was ready, and Annie could do no more in preparation. She insisted on continuing to cook but was prepared to hire a maid who would also help with James and the new baby. Annie had the new maid in mind for some time. Her name was Jeannie O’Hara, 18 years old with red hair, a mass of freckles, an upturned nose, green eyes, and a Cork brogue. Annie had worked with her for several years at the *Minerva*. Jeannie moved to live with us in the third week in June and quickly became an important member of the family.

### **Journal entry—*July 1623***

Despite Captain Turner’s organizational skills, delays beyond his control continued to push the departure date for New England. Robert’s entourage had increased to some twenty people, including six immediate subordinates and a number of skilled artisans recruited to repair and build the housing we would be living in. Delays in assembling the entourage to Robert’s comfort meant that the vessel planned for the voyage left without us. What resulted was a scramble to find another ship with the spare capacity to take us all. Eventually, two vessels, the *Katherine* and the *Prophet Daniel* were found. There were further delays due to inclement weather before our small fleet finally assembled in Sutton Pool at the end of July.

Annie went into labor 7 July, with Sarah and Jeannie in attendance. That night James and I stayed at the *Minerva*, much spoilt

by great-uncle Alfred. Jeannie had been sent late in the night to say everything was proceeding smoothly and for us both to have a good night's sleep. Abigail was delivered early in the morning of 8 July. It had been such an uncomplicated birth that Annie was set to leap from her birthing stool to begin the housework. She was persuaded to go to bed and relax. On arrival back at 15 Whimble St., James and I found Annie sitting up in bed, baby Abigail at her breast. James wanted to understand exactly what had happened. He took some time to accept that the newly arrived swaddled babe had spent the last nine months growing in Annie's tummy. A bright lad, he rolled his eyes at my attempts to explain. A week later, Abigail was baptized at St. Andrews.

The last two weeks of July passed quickly. I had my most pleasurable duties as father and husband. Less interesting was the time I needed to spend with Robert to help solve minor last-minute problems that he considered crises. It was mostly a case of providing moral support, as Captain Turner had everything under control. I was concerned that Robert saw each incident as a potential disaster. He was now aware of the significance of what his father would have him do, and he was terrified. I was worried about his real fear of the upcoming voyage. I had assumed that while on Venetian service he had spent much time on board ships. He had, after all, made the journeys between England and Venice. But Robert admitted that for the most part he served on land. At sea he had been on large galleys with hundreds of men and great comfort. The trip to New England would be a new experience for him.

As Annie had told me would happen some months earlier, she became preoccupied with Abigail. She was careful to pay attention to James, however. He was promoted to big brother in charge of Abigail's happiness, and he delighted in the role. Once he saw that her cries were a form of communication, he became adept in translating them into needs to be satisfied and was quick to inform Jeannie or his mother what was required.

## — CHAPTER 15 —

### **Journal entry—August 1623**

We set sail on 2 August, a fine day, two vessels filled with sundry passengers, settlers for New Plimouth and Virginia, families with wives and children, as well as Robert's party and their families. We had a week's good weather before the first storm hit us. I was on the *Katherine* with Robert and his entourage, who were quickly confined to their berths. The storm cleared after a rough three days, by which time the *Katherine* had become separated from the *Prophet Daniel*.

The passengers began to feel more human as they became used to the motion of the *Katherine*. I found myself drawn to William Blackstone, one of the two parsons aboard, the other being William Morrell. They were both quiet, studious men who, with the captive congregation on board, enjoyed gentle competition in their services and sermons. Morrell had been persuaded to make the voyage with the expectation that he would superintend all the New England settlements. Blackstone was to be the chaplain to Robert's settlement. He understood that he would be the shepherd of a disparate flock of sailors, settlers, and fishermen, none of whom he expected to be godly. He had brought a large library of books with him, assuming that as long as he provided the episcopal services the new Governor required, he would be free to pursue his academic and literary interests. I enjoyed his company and we conversed on many subjects. He

knew my old schoolteacher the Reverend Robert Cheeke by reputation and was entertained by my stories of being a mischievous student under his tutelage.

To reach Pannaway we were headed toward Monhegan. About a week from making landfall we hit a major fog bank. The wind died, leaving us cold and wet. Although there were families of settlers on board, a group of a dozen or so laborers and servants in Robert's party became increasingly undisciplined. Robert's officers showed poor leadership skills and did little to quell the bad behavior. In storms and bad weather, terror and discomfort kept the passengers quiet, but in calm, uncomfortable circumstances they became restless. The seamen had been needling the "landlubbers," adding to their misery. Luckily the fog cleared, the sun came out, and land was sighted, which soothed everyone. I kept my thoughts to myself, but I worried about what the behavior of Robert's party might portend.

### **Journal entry**—*September 1623*

Bypassing Monhegan, we stopped at Damariscove, briefly, for fresh supplies and water. The following day we sailed southwest to Piscataqua and Pannaway. It was good to see David and Amyes again and to get away from the *Katherine*. I had begun to find the mood and atmosphere on the ship increasingly ominous, the gentle William Blackstone notwithstanding. I asked David about Samoset. He had passed through earlier in the year and was thought to be heading north, back to his people. I received the startling news that Thomas Weston had already come and gone from Pannaway. Told that his settlement at Wessagusset had been abandoned, Weston was anxious to see for himself what had happened and left immediately. He had sailed in a shallow with fourteen of his men from Monhegan, whence he had arrived by ship from England. David had not received the orders from Sir Ferdinando to detain Weston on arrival, so let him go.

With Weston heading for Wessagusset, Robert decided that we

should follow him and make that our destination. Robert should be able to use it as a base and plan to establish himself on his own land grant farther east, later. He was determined to arrest Weston as soon as he caught up with him, thereby demonstrating the Governor's authority. The *Prophet Daniel* had still to catch up with us. We sailed round Cape Ann and into Massachusetts Bay, arriving off Wessagusset that evening—no sign of Weston. The next few days were spent unloading Gorges' party and their supplies. The buildings at Wessagusset were a sorry sight. While structurally sound, they had been badly maintained and were filthy. Happy to be ashore, the women set to work with a will, scrubbing and brushing, while the artisans began to repair roofs and storerooms, clearing away in the process an amazing amount of natural undergrowth that had started to invade.

### **Journal entry—October 1623**

I had no idea what had happened to Weston, but I hoped to encourage Robert to seize the initiative and establish his authority by every means. He needed to make an official visit to New Plimouth to have Bradford and the Separatists acknowledge their acceptance of his Governorship. While he was horrified at the spartan living conditions at Wessagusset, his people were quickly making it habitable. Robert had scant interest in getting back on a boat, but Weston's speedy arrest and conviction were important. I was able to persuade Robert to sail back towards Piscataqua in the *Katherine* to hunt him down. I stayed behind as I wanted to explore the area around Wessagusset.

After Robert left I received a note from David Thomson saying that shortly after his departure from Pannaway, Weston had been hit by a squall off the Merrimack River. A nasty sand bar at the mouth and the river's fast current meeting a tide in mid-flood, driven by a nor'easterly wind, had created treacherous conditions. The resulting maelstrom had nearly capsized the shallop. Weston had fallen

overboard, and the shallop with crew was swept away. Weston struggled ashore and was captured by Indians, stripped, beaten, then let go. He made his way back to Pannaway, finding his crew safely returned. David attempted to detain him, but Weston gave him the slip. Weston left with his crew in the shallop, presumably making directly for New Plimouth, having nowhere else to go.

Exploring the shoreline round Wessagusset, I found many bays, inlets, and islands. The land was largely open and looked fertile, but well forested in places, the undergrowth cleared to allow easy passage through the trees. Indians had cultivated the area for years. There were numerous attractive sites for future settlement. The Indians who had made the lives of Weston's settlers so miserable seemed to have distanced themselves from the settlement. Standish's punitive expedition had scared them off.

### **Journal entry**—*November 1623*

A fortnight later, a disconsolate Robert Gorges arrived back at Wessagusset by land. I met with Robert, who told me that he had sailed for Piscataqua but contrary winds had blown the *Katherine* south. The vessel landed instead in New Plimouth, where Weston, fortuitously, had arrived, arrogant and unapologetic. Robert arrested him immediately but was persuaded by William Bradford not to bring him to trial. Despite wanting to clap Weston in irons, Robert had acquiesced to Bradford's soft words and let the scoundrel go, under his own recognizance to behave. Robert then returned to Wessagusset, leaving Weston in New Plimouth, along with Mr. Morrell and Mr. Blackstone.

I told Robert that he had missed a chance to stamp his authority on New England. Now it would be that much more difficult for him to convince the settlers to accept his position as Governor and establish the rule of law and order that his father so wanted him to achieve. I reminded him that Weston had stolen cannon meant for

New England's defense, sold them to the French, our enemies, and pocketed the proceeds, surely a capital offence. Stung, Robert sent a note to Bradford, demanding that Weston be arrested and escorted back to Wessagusset for trial at soon as was possible. However, a reply came from Bradford questioning the advisability of arresting Weston. Bradford pointed out that Weston and his men had few remaining supplies and if Robert's orders were carried out the responsibility for the care and feeding of them would rest entirely with the Governor. With winter fast upon us, Robert had no wish to spend his resources on Weston and his men. In fact, he wanted nothing more to do with the man whom he had grown to detest more because of his arrogance and rudeness than the crimes he had committed. I pointed out that Robert was in danger of losing all respect by condoning the appalling behavior of one of his supposed subjects. So a further letter was sent and Weston finally was returned in his shallop, a captive. If found guilty, what was to be done with him? There was no lock-up outside New Plimouth.

However, a more immediate concern was the trial process itself. The original intent had been to arrest and convict Weston on arrival and then to ship him back to England on the *Katherine* via Virginia. But the *Katherine* had already departed. There wasn't much point convicting Weston and then not being able to imprison him. We were, therefore, stuck with Weston and his men at Wessagusset until sometime in the new year. What a predicament!

The next task for Robert was to assert control over New England waters. Two of his officers were sent to Damariscove and Monhegan to establish their authority on behalf of the Governor. They were gloomy at the prospect. Without any enforcing mechanism, their one option was to sell the benefits of control of the New England fishing grounds to allow only sanctioned vessels to fish there. As most of the fishing vessels were from the West Country, they hoped to stretch a point and say those fishing vessels were all sanctioned. Vessels from France, Holland, and Spain would be prevented or forcibly removed. By the spring of next year, the *Great Neptune* was expected to be on

station. Its dimensions and ordnance would be overwhelming. Compliance now, ahead of the arrival of the means of enforcement next year, would stand the West Country fishermen in good stead and eliminate the need to deal with more stringent measures later. I gave to the officer headed to Damariscove a report I had written to Sir F. providing a description of the dour situation, for onward shipment by fishing vessel. It would not make for happy reading.

### **Journal entry—December 1623**

After long discussions Robert agreed to return to New Plimouth to make an official visit in his capacity as Governor, with his remaining entourage serving as escort. He had to impress as well as pay close attention to what was happening in New Plimouth. After all, it was his only substantial settlement. He hoped to support Reverend Morrell in confirming his role as the superintending cleric in New England. We sailed down to New Plimouth, where William Bradford met us most courteously. Captain Standish had marshalled his men for inspection by the Governor. There was even a cannon salute. Robert was suitably impressed.

We heard that the *Katherine* had left under a cloud. Her seamen had become intoxicated one night and had inadvertently set fire to the houses in which they were quartered. The fire spread to a number of other buildings being used by the new settlers as well as to the primary storage barn for New Plimouth. Prompt action and hard work had contained the fire to the barn. Although the building was damaged, the stores had been rescued. Unfortunately, the houses were destroyed with all the belongings of those new settlers. That and the spartan living conditions in New Plimouth had convinced those settlers and their families to leave with the *Katherine*, either to stay in Virginia or return to England. While Bradford and his new Governor met to gain a better understanding of each other, I went in search of Mr. Morrell and Mr. Blackstone.



I found them separately. Blackstone was seated at the kitchen table of a small house close to the stockade walls. He had two of his books on the table, and he was deeply engrossed in a third. He had looked up when I knocked and entered. Without saying anything he pointed to a seat and turned back to his book. I sat in companionable silence, not wishing to disturb the man. My thoughts wandered. I wondered how my family was doing. Little Abigail was three months old already. I was so deep in my reverie that I was startled when the minister eventually greeted me.

“Sorry, Mr. Blackstone, my thoughts were back in England.”

I asked him how he found the Separatists. He considered this for a long moment.

“I don’t think I have much compatibility with them. I am by inclination, as well as training, an episcopal minister. I find their strict dogma constraining and, I must say, self-serving. It appears contrived and enables them to control their people. Everything is prescribed. What isn’t is proscribed. There appear to be several classes of citizen: the Separatists, the non-Separatists, and the ‘Particulars’, so called because they had paid their own particular way over. I suppose I am a Particular; at least, I’m not a Separatist. There are a large number of us. The Separatists are required to rejoice in the Lord. The Particulars are left to sorrow without the Lord’s helping hand.”

“How does Mr. Morrell deal with this situation? He is here to establish his position as the presiding cleric in New England.”

“Ah! I’m afraid Mr. Morrell does not wish to be confrontational. As far as I know, he has not made his position clear to Mr. Bradford and his people. He is respected, as I am, for being a man of God, but we are treated with some detachment as we have not declared ourselves separate from our Anglican faith, and I doubt we will ever do so.”

My heart sank. It seemed that the strategy Sir F. had for establishing Robert as the recognized and respected Governor of New England was failing to achieve its second objective. If Bradford continued to see himself as independent from the religious

superintendency conferred through the Governorship to Reverend Morrell, then Bradford would pay no more than lip service to Robert. Mr. Blackstone and I continued our conversation in a gentle and relaxing manner, once I could move my thoughts from Robert Gorges to the good man beside me. While I did not ask him any pointed questions, I inferred that he did not see his future as part of a loud and busy settlement. He had always been something of a recluse, with his books being his life. He had volunteered to join Robert Gorges' expedition as a means of escape rather than to engage in an adventure.

Leaving Mr. Blackstone, I looked for Mr. Morrell. He was talking with a group of settlers, mainly women who were digging and tending their late-year crops. He saw me approach, excused himself, and came towards me.

"Mr. Stanfield. Good day to you. I have been learning about the settlers' farming activities. It seems that when they first came here, each family was required to commit a large amount of their time to communal farming, everyone sharing. Those whose duties prevented them from that work would receive a portion of the produce from those who did the farming. But the result was low productivity. Harvests were poor because no one wanted to work harder than anyone else. The pace was set by the slowest or laziest worker. No one gained; everyone lost. After repeated suggestions that each family be allowed to grow their own food and then contribute a portion to the common stock, the rules were thus changed. And with remarkable results, as now all have the incentive to grow as much as they can. The surplus they can use to barter with. There is a parable here, and I am determined to make it the basis of a sermon I will preach."

I appreciated his enthusiasm but saw what Reverend Blackstone had implied. Reverend Morrell wanted to be a part of the community, not a forceful leader. He enjoyed the people, and I sensed his desire that they enjoy him. He was not going to risk alienating anyone. I returned to Mr. Bradford's house—called the Governor's house. I mentally shook my head at the incongruity of the situation. Robert Gorges

was the Governor General with authority vested in him by the Council for New England back in England, and no resources with which to govern. In contrast, William Bradford had been duly elected by the people he governed with their wholehearted respect and support and all the resources he needed, including a standing army. When I joined them, it was clear that the conversation between the two governors was labored in the extreme, with Bradford being polite and Robert surly. Eventually Robert used my presence as the excuse to finish the meeting. He rose. Bradford did likewise. Robert offered his hand as if he had a pontifical ring to be kissed, but Bradford merely shook hands quickly. Robert was staying at the Governor's house, so retired to his room. Then Bradford turned to me.

"You look a sight better than when I last saw you after your Epenow adventure. How are the wounds?"

"Thank you, sir. Fully healed."

He offered me a glass of wine, and we sat.

"Your Governor has a difficult task ahead of him. I am confused about his intent and the likelihood of its success."

I explained that he was here to prepare the way for the arrival of his father next year with some two hundred settlers by establishing a New England governing structure. Bradford understood the plan but still was at a loss to understand the role that Robert Gorges was expected to play. Clearly he was not impressed with Robert but was too diplomatic to voice his thoughts.

I changed the subject and said I had been greatly saddened to hear about the passing of Tisquantum. Bradford shook his head and said he had heard that Tisquantum had been less than open and honest with the various factions with whom he did business. Sadly, before succumbing to the fever he had just about reached the end of his usefulness, as his Indian people no longer trusted him. He died, according to Bradford, seeking Christian salvation and was mourned by the settlers, who had so benefited from his friendship. I asked him about the settlers' relations with the local Indians, now that Tisquantum was gone.

“Much improved since you were last here. Last year about this time, I went with Tisquantum by shallop around Cape Cod to survey the coast and mark the shoals. In the course of the journey, rather like you, we became shipwrecked. At least, the boat broke from its mooring while we were ashore and was damaged when it washed up farther down the coast. We were able to meet with and establish cautious relations with the Nauset tribe. They provided maize and other supplies.”

He continued.

“Earlier this year, we were informed that Massasoit was exceeding ill. I sent Edward Winslow to him with what medicines we had. Remarkably, Massasoit was cured, and as a result he has become a true friend of ours.”

I fell silent, thinking back on the years I had known Tisquantum. Bradford broke through my thoughts by saying that he had heard that the Reverend John White of Dorchester had organized a new trading post on Cape Ann. The settlers had arrived a short time before. He understood my relationship with the Reverend White was a long and intimate one. He expressed to me his concern that the settlers were encroaching on land that he believed belonged to the Separatists. I showed my surprise. I told him I was aware that plans for the new trading post had been made a year or so back, waiting on the Council for New England to give approval. I further understood that the Council’s approval had been granted and a patent awarded. So I was at a loss to understand Bradford’s contention. He replied with some asperity that he had been informed that the patent had been awarded to the Separatists. However, the written patent had not, as yet, been delivered to him.

I then brought up the subject of the Conants. Bradford pursed his lips.

“Proverbs 13 verse 20: *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.* We have several people here who do not fit into our community. We try to maintain our Christian tolerance of them, but they are a trial to us.”

He went on to complain about two settlers, Reverend Lyford and John Oldham. Both, in Bradford's opinion, were beyond the pale. They did not have sufficient purity of thought and deed to be suitable neighbors. I was intrigued but didn't want the conversation to descend into gossip about the misdeeds of those two men.

"But how does their behavior reflect badly on the Conants? I knew the Conants in England. They seem to be gentle, God-fearing folk."

"Mr. Conant came to us with the intent of taking some kind of supervisory role over the Weston settlers. Being associated with them did nothing for his reputation. He befriended Lyford and Oldham, a further black mark against him. He was introduced to us as a salter, with skills of which we continue to have great need. We must have salt if we are to ship dry fish back to England and to preserve and store our food for the winter. Mr. Conant has not been successful in his attempts to build salt pans, harvest the salt, and store it. He has cost us time and money with little return—in my mind, a final black mark."

It was then I saw clearly the hard stare of a dogmatic Separatist. There was little humanity in the look. Bradford was becoming an intolerant leader. Perhaps he needed to in order to survive in this wilderness.

I made my leave shortly thereafter and sought out the Conants. They and their young son shared a small house with Oldham, his family, and Reverend Lyford. It was a cramped and dismal place, and the children were subdued. The weather was cold, with the promise of snow. A fireplace in the kitchen provided some warmth. There was a single bedroom upstairs with a sheet on a rope dividing it into two barely private sections. Lyford slept on a mattress in the kitchen. There didn't seem to be much of a future for any of them in New Plymouth. Conant came with the expectation of an important position with Weston. When that failed to materialize, he tried to use his skills as a salter to become a useful and respected member of the Separatist settlement, but these efforts seemed to have fallen through. I asked him why.

“Mr. Stanfield, I very much regret it stemmed from a misunderstanding. I was a member of the Salters Guild in London. I was a merchant dealing, amongst other things, in salted goods. When I came here, Mr. Bradford was under the impression I had experience in the production of salt. Although I lacked that experience, I offered to help. Foolishly, as I created a false expectation and I was singularly unsuccessful.”

I asked him about his relationship with the Separatists.

“I find them to be very intolerant towards any religious practice except their own. I have sympathy with people who desire reform of the Church of England but who don’t wish to separate from it.”

“What then?” I asked.

“I’m afraid my position is considered almost to be heresy, and they want little to do with me. Hence I am in conversation with other ‘Particulars’ who are keen to leave New Plimouth and establish a new settlement elsewhere. But for now, the worry about the dangers of leaving the shelter of a stockaded community transcends the desire to move, no matter how unwelcome we are made to feel.”

Lyford I found most unprepossessing. He had an insincere, unassuming demeanor about him. He was an ordained Anglican minister but said he followed the Separatist dogma in public. When alone with Conant and Oldham, however, he was highly critical of it. I didn’t like him. I felt there was a serious deficiency in his character. Oldham was a fiery and direct character. The limited amount I saw of him, he always seemed angry. He certainly had little positive to say about the Separatists. The three men had been thrown together in adverse conditions. They were not of the Leiden faithful, so arrived at a disadvantage. But they draped their differences round themselves and would or could not change to become more amenable. They were in a cage of their own making. A passing remark by Conant surprised me.

“My brother Christopher has arrived from England. He paid his respects to the Separatists, and they have accepted him. He has been given an acre of land to cultivate and lives with other single men.”

So it was not impossible, I thought to myself, to get along with the Separatists. I felt sorry for Roger Conant and his family, but there was nothing I could do to help them.

Robert Gorges and his entourage returned to Wessagusset some days later. Reverend Morrell and Reverend Blackstone returned with us. With their help, we attempted to bring Christmas to our dwelling. The holiday was not to be compared to the Christmases and Twelfth Nights of my past. But our Christmas season was certain to be better than the plight of the settlers in New Plimouth, where Christmas festivities were frowned upon and Twelfth Night celebrations banned.

Thoughts of Annie, James, and Abigail were constant. I raised a glass and silently toasted them all on James' birthday. I tried to picture what Abigail looked like at 6 months. I saw them all round a big fire in the kitchen at Whimple Street, with decorations and candles, telling stories, roasting nuts. I longed to be back with them.

## — CHAPTER 16 —

### **Journal entry—***January 1624*

By the end of Twelfth Night it was clear to me that Sir F.'s attempt to install Robert as Governor was a failure. New England was losing its appeal.

January passed slowly. When weather permitted I explored further by sea and foot. Reverend Blackstone took to accompanying me on the shallop I used on a number of occasions. I had the distinct impression that he was looking for a location to build a home of his own. We sailed north through a chain of islands into an extensive natural harbor into which flowed a river. I remembered copying Champlain's 1613 map of the harbor for Sir F. and the river he called Riviere Du Gas. We explored the harbor and found several sites that interested Blackstone. One was on a peninsula, on raised ground that looked over the harbor towards the sea. He was quiet, contemplative, and self-contained in a serene way. It seemed he was close to finding something he had been looking for all his life.

The snows came, and we were isolated in our little settlement in Wessagusset. But it was warm and dry, with enough families to bring a sense of community and festive moments. A sailor had a flute and played songs that we all sang together. Stories were told, and services were held, featuring Blackstone and Morrell in continuing competition with their sermons. There was one brooding presence,



Robert Gorges. With winter wrapped around us, there was little we could do and nothing Robert wanted to do to meet his father's objectives. He stayed alone and aloof, with wine and brandy always close at hand. I had little to say to him, and he wanted none of my advice. I offered to show him the coastline, but he had no interest. I suggested we visit the land grant his father had provided him. Too cold, he said.

### **Journal entry—*February 1624***

In mid-February we received a note from David Thomson that Captain Christopher Levett had arrived and was in residence at Panaway. Robert, despite his distaste for the sea, arranged to sail there in order to swear in Levett to his Governor's Council and provide a judicial quorum for the court case against Weston. I accompanied him.

We sailed first to Cape Ann. I was determined to meet with P.'s settlers. Robert was happy to break the journey and wanted to see evidence of new settlements that would extend his authority. We sailed into Beaufort harbor and moored off the beach close to where the settlement had been established. It was immediately apparent that the place was in a woeful state of repair. The few men present all came to the shoreline eager to greet Robert and me after we were rowed ashore. While we were becoming acquainted, Robert quickly grew bored and, distracted, wandered off to inspect the plantation. There were fourteen men at the settlement. The crude huts they had built, for the most part from rough-hewn wood, canvas covering gaps for windows and with thatched roofs, looked poorly put together. They needed to be replaced with more permanent structures. I was shown the fishing stages, which required repairing and extending. West Country merchants had persuaded fishermen years ago to build the stages to dry fish they were catching locally for shipment to England at the end of the season. It was the knowledge of their activities that had persuaded P. and his Dorchester Company to send

the men there. They had arrived well provisioned but, being primarily fishermen, were not adept at cultivating the land to grow the food they needed to survive. They were finding the ground rocky, and in any case, most of the men were away fishing. They had discovered that the best fishing was some 20 miles offshore. Much unproductive time was spent going to and from the fishing grounds. The weather was poor and the seas rough. It was a short visit but, for me anyway, an instructive and disturbing one. Robert had no interest in being entertained ashore, so we spent the night aboard and left early the following morning, 27 February.

At Pannaway, a letter was awaiting Robert from his father. Sir F. had finally realized that he was not going to get the financial support needed to complete the *Great Neptune* or to fund any major settlements in New England. He had decided that there was no point in pursuing his plan to come over. Robert held his first and last Governor's Council, with Levett sworn in as a member. Weston, abashed, had been kept in close confinement at Wessagusset. After much debate, the Council agreed that there was no longer a reason to make an example of him by bringing him to trial. Levett suggested an alternative measure.

"It seems that the better thing we can do is to remove him from New England. If we can't make an example of him, we should eliminate his pernicious influence."

Robert, who had been chewing his lower lip in silence while the debate went on, spoke up.

"We should give him back his boat and order him gone from New England under the direst of threats if he should ever return. What's more, Bradford was right—Weston and his men have almost no provisions left, and they have been a terrible drain on the scant resources we have. We need to cut our losses and provide them with enough supplies to sail to Virginia."

I asked Levett about his intentions. He said he had found the location for the settlement he wished to build, on an island northeast of Saco, beyond Cape Elizabeth. The fortified house was being built,

and when completed he planned to return to England, probably later this year, to gather a substantial number of additional settlers to the forty or so indentured men he had brought over. He stated that his settlement would be self-governing and self-supporting. He had experienced the intransigent attitudes of English fishing captains in the Casco area who were contemptuous of the Council for New England and ignored its attempts to control the fishing. Nor did Levett want any local governing infrastructure controlling his freedom of action.

It was clear that attempts to further the authority of the Council of New England had been unsuccessful and—without manpower, military and civil instruments of government, and a religious hierarchy set in place—were destined to remain so. With all said and done, there was no reason for Robert to continue with his efforts to prepare a seat of government for Sir F. He and his entourage should return to England. With that last pronouncement the Council meeting ended.

I had a final meal with David and Amyes. I mentioned that Robert and I had been to visit the settlement on Cape Ann. David said another had been established farther up the Piscataqua River at Cochecho by people who had come out with him last year. I asked about Askuwheteau and his Winnipесаaukee tribe. Had David made contact with him after returning to New England? David smiled ruefully.

“It would have been better if you had returned with me. I met with Askuwheteau but, not having your close relationship, I was unable to convince him to trade with us at Pannaway when he now had trading partners closer to his lands.”

“Why don’t you join that settlement?” I asked.

“It’s an option, although I would rather be in control of my own plantation. There appears to be much more activity in Massachusetts Bay. I have heard, for example, that in addition to the Cape Ann settlement, there is another one, established at Nantasket two years ago, that is becoming something of a magnet for disaffected settlers from New Plimouth.”

David and I talked about the harbor and the islands that Reverend

Blackstone and I had explored. Nantasket and Wessagusset were close by. We had found many places that seemed ideal for settlement. I mentioned that I expected Blackstone would resettle away from New Plimouth. At the end of the evening we wished each other well. I was saddened to think that it would probably be a long time before we'd meet again. I wanted to return to England as soon as possible, so would in all likelihood be travelling back with our short-serving Governor.

I also met alone with Captain Levett. He told me that he had encountered a number of Indians while exploring the area around Cape Elizabeth and Casco Bay. He had met one, Samoset, who greatly interested him. He had heard tell of Samoset's exploits with the Separatists. In one of their conversations, Samoset mentioned my name. Levett said Samoset hoped I would have an opportunity to come to Pemaquid, whence he had returned from his wanderings. Levett noted that he had developed good relations with the local Indian tribes, who all said that they would welcome the settlement Levett was planning. Their response boded well for a future substantial trading post. Levett said he would leave a small number of settlers to look after the property and maintain cordial relations with the Indians while he returned to England. The following morning I sailed back with Robert to Wessagusset.

Weston was released. He sailed first to New Plimouth to pick up the rest of his men before heading for Virginia. On arrival in New Plimouth, he begged for supplies with which to barter for additional provisions as he worked his way down the coast. Bradford, with extraordinary Christian charity, gave him 100 beaver pelts.

A boat was due to call in at New Plimouth from Virginia on its way back to England. An aide to Robert sent Bradford a note asking him to have the boat pick up the Governor and those of his people who wished to return to England. It would be several weeks before the boat arrived, so I decided to go to Pemaquid. The shallop at Wessagusset was available, and the crew sailed me thence. I now planned to make my own way back to England, so the crew returned

to Wessagusset. By the time I had left Robert, we were no longer on speaking terms. For that matter, he wasn't on speaking terms with anyone. He looked sick—the climate, the disappointment, the discomfort, and the spirits he consumed all contributors to his ill health. Blackstone and Morrell had gone back to New Plimouth, but most of the settlers were already beginning to spread out along the shores of Massachusetts Bay.

At Pemaquid, I was welcomed by Samoset. It had been many years since I was last there, but not much had changed. His people had suffered but had recovered from the plague that killed so many others farther south. Samoset came with me when I went to visit Tahanedo, the Sagamore. He greeted me as an old friend and asked if I had been seduced by any other Indian maidens. I laughed. He told me that his daughter Malian had married a young brave, the son of a local sachem, and they had two children. I wished them well.

Samoset and I took a canoe and paddled around the point at Pemaquid and along the shoreline up to Muscongus Bay. We talked about all that had happened in our lives since we had last met in New Plimouth. It had been there that I had last seen Tisquantum. Samoset shook his head when I mentioned his name.

“Tisquantum became too clever for his own good. It is sad that he has gone, but I wasn't surprised. Epenow was his enemy, and Massasoit learned things, true or not, that made him distrust Tisquantum.”

“How did he die?” I asked.

“Alone and unhappy. Ever since he returned home to find everyone dead, he had isolated himself from his own kind. He had wanted to be a friend bridging the divide between the Indian and the English. He sought to adopt the English, but they didn't trust him. By the end he had no friends and feared his enemies.”

“Was he poisoned?”

Samoset slowly shook his head.

“I think his mind poisoned his will to live. He died of a fever, but I think he was tired of living. Sad.”

I agreed. Tisquantum had been a good friend to the settlers, at

least in the first few years. I felt guilt, too. We English had used him to our advantage. I had used him. I remembered David Thomson's description of Tisquantum after his arrival at Patuxet and how Tisquantum had left to find his entire family dead. A tragedy.

There was much to talk about with Samoset. We camped for the night on an island at the top of the bay. He observed towards the end of our canoe trip that his people had now accepted that the English were here to stay and that more and more would come to establish settlements. For the Indians, anger and sadness mixed with a recognition that their lives were changing; some said for the better, but most feared a bleak future where the cultures would be in conflict. Samoset saw that there were as many differences among the English as there were among his people—good and bad and many variations in between.

He asked when I would be coming back with my family to live. He felt it important not only for him personally but also for the development of understanding and friendship between the two cultures. For those English like me and Levett there were many more who represented a threatening attitude towards his people. I was noncommittal, saying I would need to return to England and discuss the prospect with my wife. Samoset laughed.

“You are the man of the house. It is your decision to make. Don't hide behind your wife, if you do not yet know. Perhaps you already know and do not want to disappointment me.”

I stared into the fire. He was right the first time. I didn't know. After a long silence, I admitted as such. I was torn, a foot in each country. He nodded.

“Like a man with one foot on the land and the other in a canoe, unstable.”

Next morning we returned to Pemaquid. From there, we went to Damariscove, where fishing boats were coming and going regularly. A vessel was leaving for England in a few days. We returned to the village, and I packed my belongings. I bid farewell to Tahanedo, and Samoset took me by canoe back to Damariscove.

“Samoset, my friend. I leave you with a heavy heart. I can’t promise you when I will return.”

We shook hands, and he left. He did not look back, but I watched till I lost sight of him.

## — CHAPTER 17 —

### **Journal entry—*May 1624***

Five weeks later, the vessel docked in Bristol, and within a few days I was in Plymouth. I went immediately to 15 Whimble Street. At the door, I heard Annie's voice in happy conversation with James. I was deeply content to be home and lingered at the door, savoring the moment. Entering, I saw Annie and James sitting at the kitchen fire with their backs to me, chattering away. Jeannie was standing at the table with baby Abigail in her arms and saw me enter. Her eyes opened wide in shock, as did her mouth, ready to shout a warning—then, as she recognized me, a greeting. I put my finger to my lips, slipped onto a chair at the table, and waited. Jeannie, with a great smile on her face, couldn't contain herself and started skipping from foot to foot, Abigail chortling at the motion. Eventually, James noticed and asked why she was so fidgety. At that Annie turned to Jeannie and then was startled to see this strange man sitting at her table. I grinned, and Annie let out a whoop and launched herself at me. Chair knocked over, me sprawling on the floor with Annie and then James on top of me. What a welcome! We disentangled ourselves, and I was introduced to my 9-month-old daughter. Jeannie placed her into my arms, a mirror image of Annie. She looked up at me with wide open eyes and then squinted, farted, and gurgled. What joy.

Much later, children asleep and Jeannie retired to her room, all



upstairs on the new attic floor, Annie and I went to our bed. She had asked Jeannie to fill a bath with heated water in our bedroom. Sweet-smelling Annie was not prepared to bed a foul-smelling husband. After much scrubbing till said husband was pink and clean, Annie led me to bed. Our love making was urgent. We had been too long away from each other. Afterward, lying in each other's arms, we had much to talk about. Dawn was beginning to streak the night before we slept. Jeannie left us alone, but we were woken by her admonishments to the children to be quiet. Annie rose in all her rounded beauty and, pulling on a robe, went to the bedroom door and called down to Jeannie to bring breakfast. We were joined by James, who ran and jumped on the bed, followed by a fast crawling Abigail. All four of us happily cuddled under the covers until Jeannie arrived with a tray of food and drink. It was then it struck me, again—how could I forget that my family was too important to me to leave them for such long periods? There was a contentment, a sense of responsibility, a stability that Annie provided that I treasured above all things. What did this mean for my future plans?

I spent much of the day focusing on my two children. James wanted to hear stories of my adventures, which I was pleased to recount. Abigail wanted to be in the center of any action, crawling so quickly that she threatened to trip anyone sufficiently unwary. She would grab a leg, pull herself to her feet, and look up for approval with a happy smile. Annie left her unclouted, so we needed to watch where we stepped. Jeannie, though, was quick to deal with any messes. Domestic bliss. Why did I ever go away? Being Sunday and up too late for Matins, we went to Evensong at St. Andrews and gave thanks that we were back together as a family.

On arrival in Plymouth I had sent a note to the Fort asking to meet with Sir F., for whom I had prepared a final report, and John Gorges. I assumed that Robert had yet to return. It would be a difficult meeting, but I needed to make sure that Sir F. had a clear idea of the failure of Robert's venture and the reasons that went beyond his son's own inadequacies. From his letter to Robert I knew that Sir F.

would be disengaging from further involvement with New England, at least for a while. But P. and his Dorchester Company had picked up the slack with their Cape Ann settlement.

Early Monday morning a messenger arrived from the Fort with Sir Ferdinando's request for my attendance at my earliest convenience. John Gorges was with Sir F. when I arrived at his office to a subdued greeting. I was shocked at Sir F.'s appearance—thin, eyes deeply sunken with dark rings underneath, face grey. He seemed to have aged ten years. I glanced at John, who saw my look of concern and winced. They were puzzled that I had not returned with Robert. It seemed that Robert had not been regular with his reporting, and they didn't know where he was and when he was due back. They had read the report I had sent from New England, and I delivered my final report to them, which they took the time to read, Sir F. handing each page to John as he finished it. I watched their expressions, both clearly unhappy with the news. A long silence followed the last page being placed on the desk. "By your account, this has been an unmitigated disaster."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, you were always honest in your opinions. Your earlier report was sufficiently pessimistic for the Council for New England to accept there was little chance of Robert meeting any success. Funding has dried up. There is a hold on the ships being built. Construction has ceased, absent our ability to pay the costs. As a result I sent Robert the letter that your report references. Your account of his only Governor's Council meeting is a pitiful commentary on our failure."

I nodded. The report was a damning indictment of Robert's unsuitability to lead the expedition. It exposed the near impossibility of achieving any real success with the few resources and minimal bargaining options available. Sir F. asked what I thought might happen going forward. I suggested we go to his map room, where I had created a detailed map of New England some years previously. There I was able to show that the coastline could be divided into two parts—the great Massachusetts Bay that lay between Cape Cod and Cape

Ann and the sweeping coastline north of Cape Ann with Monhegan Island its farthest point. I continued.

“The Separatists have established de facto control of the southern end of Massachusetts Bay. They are a hard bunch and determined not only to survive but to develop their own isolationist lifestyle. They are defensive both in terms of their particular brand of faith and in the territory they have carved out for themselves. They have established an uneasy relationship with the local Indians through tactics of fear. There is much mutual distrust. New Plimouth is something of an armed camp, under the bellicose direction of Captain Standish. He has established a militia that under his, admittedly competent, command is an effective defensive as well as offensive weapon. The Separatists’ intolerance of anyone not in lockstep with their beliefs has become more intense. The Strangers, who came with the Separatists, are being forced to align themselves with the Separatists or made to feel outcast. As a result, people are leaving. Many are going to Virginia or returning to England. However, some hardy souls are taking their families and moving away to form their own settlements along the coast.”

I went to the map. Wessagusset had already been included. I marked the location of Nantasket close by, describing the area I had explored around the great harbor, the islands, bays, and inlets. I was certain that other settlements would be established in that area, as the opportunities were too good to be missed. The land was most pleasing to the eye, full of promise and bountiful, sheltered but easily accessible from the sea. I talked about Reverend Blackstone’s interest, and thought that Thomas Morton would find his way there. Then there were those who had accompanied Robert to Wessagusset and were determined to stay. People would continue to go to New England—it was like an irresistible tide and did not need the establishment of a governing structure. That would come of its own volition. To cap it all, I said that David Thomson had suggested to me that he was thinking of moving south to Massachusetts Bay. Sir F. asked about Robert’s land patent. I had to admit that he had shown

little interest in it, having refused my offer to take him there. Moving north, I traced with my finger the coastline, pointing out the marshes and rivers and especially the fertile land, now mostly devoid of Indians and available for easy settlement. I described fresh water, rivers teeming with fish, open woodlands with an abundance of timber, duck, deer, and a host of other game. More particularly, the farther north and east the traveler went, the more accommodating the native population. The expeditions to Saco and those on the Piscataqua River under David Thomson had taken pains to establish good relations with the local tribes. Both David and Captain Levett had been careful to recognize, meet with, and respect the local Sagamores. David had introduced himself to the full hierarchy of Indian leadership in the territory around him.

Tracing the coastline farther northeast, I pointed out Cape Elizabeth and another great harbor next to Casco Bay with its hundreds of islands. I said that Levett was determined to settle there at a place called Quack, which he intended to rename York, on the Agamenticus. He was due to return to England later this year and hoped to bring additional settlers to New England when he returned. Sagadahoc, where the Popham expedition had failed to establish a permanent settlement, lay between Casco Bay and the lively fishing settlement of Damariscove. Mighty rivers flowed there from the hinterland, explored in part by previous seamen, all easily accessible. I told them I had left Robert at Wessagusset to await a boat for England because I had decided to return to Pemaquid to meet with Samoset. I needed to find out what he and his Indians thought about the English invasion of their lands. They saw it as inevitable and wanted it to be peaceful. If we came as friends, they would befriend us. When at last I had finished, John congratulated me. Sir F. sat musing, then asked about Robert.

“When you last saw him, how was he?”

“I’m afraid that by the time I left Wessagusset, Robert was not in good state of health. He had isolated himself from everyone, including me, and made it plain he couldn’t wait to depart.”

John raised another matter. “How was his alcohol consumption?”

I sighed and said I was not in a position to pass judgement on that. John laughed, but Sir F. frowned at his son and said nothing. Then he arose and started pacing.

“Isaac, you have done well. It was a thankless task I gave you. You have the resilience and fortitude to shrug off the disappointment and frustration, but I worry about Robert.”

“I have to tell you, sir, he did not look at all well when I left him. But distance from New England and a comfortable sea voyage home should put him to rights.”

“I hope so. Now, I feel that the time has come for me to release you from my service. I am reviewing my responsibilities and must regroup. I worked urgently for the Council to win control over access to fishing in New England waters. But that source of income has been denied me by the House of Commons through the action of my West Country friends who want to protect their own fishing rights. Not all is lost, as the King has seen fit to protect the Council itself, but I am not well and have decided to reduce my workload, which means my need for your inestimable services will be greatly reduced. I am informed that your business interests continue to thrive and your family demands more constant attention, so I hope this will not be a hardship or disappointment to you.”

“I am sad, sir. It has been an extraordinary journey working for you. I have grown from a boy to a man under your guidance, for which I am most grateful. I hope we will continue to meet on a social basis, at least.”

“We will always be friends. If the need arises, I might call for your services once more. Now, be off with you. You need to travel to Dorchester to meet with my old friend John White. Please do pass on my best wishes.”

I thanked him, shook hands with them both, and John showed me to the door. As I left, he whispered, “I need to talk to you about *Swallow*.”

The meeting had been a long one, and Annie was anxious to hear

what had happened. I told her everything.

“Does this mean you are not going back to America?”

“Certainly not in the service of Sir Ferdinando any time soon. But my love, fear not, life is sweet where you are. I would not have it any other way.”

Annie stood gnawing her lower lip, her eyes narrowed.

“You didn’t say you weren’t going back to America.”

I laughed.

“I must go and meet with P. in Dorchester. I need to give an account of my trip, especially about his settlement at Cape Ann. Why don’t we all go for a visit? Who knows, P. might try to persuade me to return to New England on an errand. You would be there to rebuff him.”

Annie relaxed and grinned at me, just like her daughter. So I kissed her. After a long embrace, I told her that I had to meet Scroud, and Annie said she would plan a trip for us all to visit Dorchester. As I left, she mentioned, “Oh! By the way, David Tremaine came by a week ago with a delightful lady.”

I stopped and turned—not Kate, surely.

“Yes, it was Kate. They plan to be married, my dear. David had come from a meeting with Sir Ferdinando and wanted to see you while in Plymouth. He thought it a good idea to bring Kate. Apparently she wanted to meet me.”

“She obviously still believes she was the force that compelled us together. God bless her for that.”

David had left me a letter, which Annie handed to me. It was short.

*Dear Isaac,*

*Sorry I missed you. Sir F. has released me from his service. I am now free to contemplate a farmer’s life. Kate is pleased to accept me as a husband. We will not delay. Please come and see us.*

*David*

I showed it to Annie and left to meet Scroud, who was pleased to see me back. While suitably deferential, he made it plain that I was a Plymouth-based merchant who needed to be focusing on my business, not taking needless risks on high-seas adventures. In response, I told him that I had been released from Sir Ferdinando's service. He looked up over his glasses at me, nodded, and quietly muttered, "About time."

Despite the economic difficulties that England faced, there was still a market for luxury items. Richard Bushrode and Captain Brown had established a working relationship with Dutch exporters of spices, silks, dyes, and other exotic merchandise brought back from distant islands in the Pacific by the Dutch East Indies Company. *Rosie* continued to carry English goods—broadcloths, kersey cloth, and other draperies and textiles that were in demand in Holland, France, and Spain. Because of the risk of pirates, *Rosie* had not ventured back to Malaga. Business was profitable but margins were tight, Scroud kept telling me, nothing like the proceeds of the Malaga run. I told him that I had spent much time thinking about how risks could be reduced sufficiently so we could renew our relationship with the Order of Mercedarians in Malaga. A note from them addressed to the *Sweet Rose* in Plymouth had arrived sometime after our last trip, regretting the trouble we had encountered with the pirates and giving thanks to God that we had escaped. They were aware of our difficulties but would welcome our return at our convenience.

I had left Richard and the Skipper with the idea of enlisting a second, well-armed vessel to accompany us. To Scroud I mentioned another idea.

"The pirates find the Order of Mercedarians useful. They demand ransom from the Order for the Christian captives. English pirates tend to prefer cash on the nail, out of the clutches of the Turks. This is especially true if they can keep English sailors out of the hell hole of the galleys and slavery. The business we do with the Order provides the brothers with the funds to pay the ransoms. Surely then, the pirates have an interest in ensuring we remain free to trade with

the Order. We should be treated as a protected attribute.”

“Very fanciful, Mr. Stanfield, if I might say so. Now, how do you establish such an arrangement, and how would it work in practice?”

This was said with much shaking of the head and in a tone of disparagement. I smiled and let the matter drop. Still, I needed to discuss it with my partners. I moved on to other topics and mentioned John Gorges’ remark about *Swallow*. Did Scroud have any idea what that was about?

“I understand, sir, that *Swallow* remains unsold. It is being used on an occasional basis, but it does not fit the normal requirements for a coastal trader. There was an attempt to purchase it, but grave suspicions arose that the agent was acting for unsavory elements, possibly with pirate connections. The Fort wants to get rid of it but only to the right party. Now, Mr. Stanfield, I thought you had weaned yourself from that idea. Be careful.”

I asked where the *Sweet Rose* was now. Scroud told me that she was at Rotherhythe, from whence she would be sailing to Le Havre, then back to Weymouth. She was not expected in Plymouth for several weeks. And Richard Bushrode? Not known, but in all likelihood he was in Weymouth or Dorchester, possibly even London. What about the need for a fast, reliable courier service? Was there a demand for a similar service for freight? I wondered what John Gorges was thinking; I needed to see him. Perhaps we should take *Swallow* to Weymouth, if we could bring the horses with us and decide later whether or not to ride back to Plymouth.

I headed back home, where Annie greeted me as if I was newly returned from America. Jeannie took care of the children while I brought Annie up to date.

“Why don’t we get out of town for an hour or two? Maddie and Tess need some exercise. For that matter, so do we.”

“Even after the last two nights? Mr. Stanfield, your stamina amazes me.”

“Mrs. Stanfield, truly there are parts well exercised, but we need to focus on the rest.”



We laughed, hugged, and called upstairs to Jeannie that we were going riding and would be back in a few hours. Heading north from Plymouth, we ambled along a lane through woods and fields, the sun of a late spring afternoon dappling us, the sounds of nature wrapping round us. Annie told me of her plan for us to visit Dorchester. It was a delicious coincidence that she, too, had thought of a boat trip to Weymouth. However, she said it would be an opportunity for her to have a break from the children, as long as we were away only a few days. Jeannie adored playing mother to the two of them, and the feelings were reciprocated. We could leave as soon as I was ready and had transport. I suggested we take the horses and ride back. Annie was persuaded. I needed to ask John Gorges about chartering *Swallow* for a one-way trip and to follow up on his cryptic comment about the vessel.

We met at the Gorges' house on New Street the following morning. We talked briefly about his father's health: John was worried, as was the rest of the family. Sir F. had left for Wraxall for a long rest, leaving John in charge at the Fort. Sir John Eliot had delegated all authority and responsibility to the Fort to sell *Swallow*. With the information he had squeezed out of the captured lieutenant, Sir John had been able to capture the captain of the pirate ship, John Nutt. He was so pleased that he had suggested serious consideration of a reward for me for helping to capture the man.

Now, *Swallow* sat in Plymouth harbor, waiting to be disposed of. It seemed that a fair offer from me would be looked on with favor. John said he had reached the conclusion that a business opportunity was to be had in using the unique attributes of *Swallow* to quickly transport vital supplies and people as well as to act as a courier service between towns along the south coast. Knowing my earlier interest, he thought to approach me to see if I might want to join him. I admitted I had been thinking along the same lines. I would need to have Scroud work out the projected costs of such an operation, and I would need to investigate the likely business that could be transacted and the scale of charges to establish. Apart from all that, there

was the purchase price of *Swallow* and its operating costs to consider. John said the boat was costing the Fort money to keep it in reasonable trim, with a skeleton crew. Ned Sampson was on retainer to skipper the boat when needed. After a long discussion about the relative merits of the opportunity, John admitted that the Gorges family was not in a position to invest in the enterprise, but he said that, if pressured, the Fort would likely negotiate a long-term agreement with the new owner to make use of such a service. I cautioned that most of the Fort's correspondence was with London. I doubted *Swallow* could reach London faster than the normal horseback courier service currently used.

“Isaac, a rider can carry only so much. Anything beyond a small packet has to go by wagon or by sea.”

I asked for two weeks to respond to him. A great help in my deliberation would be if I could charter *Swallow* to take my wife and me to Weymouth, and we would want to transport our horses. It would give me a chance to talk with Ned Sampson. While in Weymouth, I would meet with possible interested parties to invest in and make use of such a service. Having *Swallow* there would be a much added bonus. John said he would let Ned know that he should make ready for the trip. We agreed on a reasonable charter fee, and John told me that *Swallow* would be available in two days. I sent a note to P. and Richard saying I would like to meet them in Dorchester in three days.

## — CHAPTER 18 —

### **Journal entry—*June 1624***

Two days later, with the sun in red and gold diaphanous drapes peaking over the horizon, Annie and I boarded *Swallow* quayside in the Pool. We watched the horses being brought aboard, Maddie first. Block and tackle were attached to the free end of the gaff spar, a wide sling was placed under Maddie's belly, attached to the tackle and she, blindfolded, was hoisted aboard and lowered through the open main hatch. Tess followed. They struggled until their hooves left the ground. The experience was so strange they froze until they were in the hold in makeshift stalls, with hay, water, and fodder. Annie and I were down in the hold to release their hoods and give them reassurance. They settled quickly, happy to be able to nuzzle each other for comfort. A canvas shelter had been erected above the open main hatch, allowing sufficient headroom for them.

Ned and I talked for most of the journey to Weymouth. Apart from the regular coastal traders, there were some transport services available on an as-needed basis for smaller consignments along the south coast, normally provided by inshore fishermen in small, slow vessels with limited cargo capacity. From the charters he had handled over the past year, Ned advised me that there was a definite business opportunity. There was no regular and reliable service that individuals and businesses could depend on. For example, the extensive and wide-spread

Huguenot communities living in or close to the ports along the south coast, such as Plymouth, Weymouth, Bideford, and Falmouth, wanted a secure, efficient means of sustaining their interconnection. This was an interesting comment and I made a mental note to see my old friend Henri Giradeau as soon as I returned to Plymouth.

The more we talked, the broader the opportunity seemed to present itself. By the time we docked, I had made a list of a number of promising contacts, many of whom were in Weymouth. I needed to talk to Richard Bushrode before anyone else. He would have a plethora of contacts. I asked Ned to work up a detailed schedule of running costs over a twelve month period with different levels of operating activity—from regular to irregular service and to include time and costs of periodic dockside maintenance. The schedule would need to be delivered to Mr. Scroud as soon as possible. Ned said that he kept a detailed log of all costs at the request of Mr. John Gorges so my requirements could be dealt with quickly.

While I had been in conversation with Ned, Annie was down in the hold with Maddie and Tess. The movement of the boat disturbed them and Annie worked hard to keep them as calm as possible. At one point I went below and found her in a hammock slung beside the stalls. The horses now used to the regular motion, were calmed by the hiss and gurgle of the sea flowing past the hull, as was Annie, so much so she was fast asleep. I left her to it.

Dockside in Weymouth, we unloaded the horses, I thanked Ned and told him we would meet as soon as I returned to Plymouth. Annie and I tacked up and set off for Dorchester. On a whim we stopped at Bincombe to see Reverend Stoddard and to ask after Johnny Dawkins. We were greeted warmly, although it took a while for the Rector to recognize me. It had been six years. Johnny had returned from the adventures he had with the troupe of actors. The excitement and his love for the woman who had enticed him were gone. Hard work, little money and an increasing disfavor of troupes by local authorities had wrung him dry. He had gone to London; too big, too many people, too dirty and noisy, so returned. He had

married a local lass, the daughter of a tenant farmer. He now worked for his father-in-law and was penniless but happy. I asked to be remembered to him and we rode to Dorchester. I told Annie Johnny's story, how he, a ship's boy on *Rosie* had been sodomized by an officer who was subsequently hanged for treason and the sodomy. Johnny had almost been destroyed but was taken home to be nursed back to physical and mental health by his mother and Mr. Stoddard. Under their care, he had fully recovered.

We rode in easy stages to the Sun. Next morning I left Annie with the Whiteways and went to meet with P.

To my surprise and gratification Richard had already arrived. P. informed me that we were in august company. Richard had been appointed a Burgess of Dorchester earlier in the year and I congratulated him. P. first asked me to give them a report of my time in New England. They listened in silence, occasionally shaking their heads. When I covered my meeting with the settlers on Cape Ann, they both plied me with questions, concerned about the settlement's ability to survive. They were dismayed to learn of the Separatists' interest in Cape Ann.

The Dorchester Company had become active with a significant number of investors, including Will Whiteway, I was pleased to hear. Money had been raised and a vessel was being built of some 50 tons to transport more settlers and supplies. They were sending another 30 settlers over, families including farmers and artisans, also some cattle, determined to build a sustainable settlement. I was worried about the lack of leadership and the indifferent quality of the settlers. P. said that Mr. Thomas Gardner had been appointed to lead the settlement. P. knew him well as he was related to P.'s wife. Mr. John Tilly was being sent to supervise the fishing activities while Mr. Gardner was responsible for everything on land.

I had mentioned Roger Conant in my earlier report. His elder brother John Conant, rector of Lymington, near Ilchester, was a friend of P. and spoke highly of Roger as someone who could lead a group of settlers. He was calm under pressure, had a clear and

comfortable self-confidence. He was tough, although not outwardly appearing to be so and could not be bullied but rather persuaded by well-reasoned argument. John had recently received a letter from Roger which mentioned the new settlement in Cape Ann and had ruminated on it being a possible permanent residence for him and his family. He wrote that he was leaving New Plimouth for Nantasket but he saw Nantasket as at best a short term solution. He and his family needed to be members of a larger, active, and tolerant community. I wondered whether the Cape Ann settlement alone would bring additional investors into the Dorchester Company. P. and Richard preferred to remain positive. The conversation continued through lunch.

Richard and I spent some time alone to talk about how *Rosie* was doing under our joint ownership. We discussed the Malaga situation. The two were tied as existing local trade had fallen off significantly with London taking an increasing amount of the cross channel trade. We needed to explore commercial opportunities further afield. Richard had talked to his fellow merchants about pairing up to provide a better defense against pirates. The only interest in the idea came from Bristol but they weren't happy working with traders neither based in Bristol nor members of the Bristol Merchant Adventurers guild. So nothing had come of it.

We kept coming up with ideas which became more and more far-fetched. Until Richard ended the conversation by saying the only way we could even consider such an idea would be in conversation with the Mercedarians in Malaga. That would mean a trip down there. We needed to go anyway as we had left Malaga without providing the Order with any real intentions of what we planned. *Rosie* was due in Plymouth next week. We should meet again there with the Skipper to continue the discussion.

I raised the subject of *Swallow* with Richard. I went through my ideas with him and he was quite interested. Trade with the Continent, as well as coastal trading around the British Isles, was slowing down. It was difficult to find the business and, when it was found, bargaining with the traders was difficult. However, there were special

requirements that didn't fit the normal trading pattern. Timely and reliable delivery were key. Being able to make a return trip, for example, between Weymouth and Dorchester in a day would be most attractive to a certain category of customer. But would there be enough of them? I said that if we did proceed we needed to bolster the permanent crew—perhaps J.B. and Obi could be likely mate and bosun for Ned Sampson. Richard then expressed his concerns about *Rosie's* situation. The Skipper and Peg Jones were getting close to the end of their shipboard life. We needed to deal with that before deciding on additional crew for *Swallow*. That set me back. It would be a major challenge and needed careful thought. It was clear that I had to become a much more active and engaged part owner of *Rosie*. Richard said he would sound out his contacts and get them to come up with a range of services they might like to have. Perhaps their suggestions would even induce them to see the opportunities for themselves.

The day had been long and my brain was weary. I bade farewell to Richard and the Whites and made my way back to Will and Eleanor. We were pressed to sup with them and Annie insisted she help with the preparations, while Will and I went to his sitting room. He showed me his recent diary entries which continued to cover matters local and distant. I asked him what he planned to do with it. Will was puzzled by my question.

“What does one normally do with a diary? I write it for my own delectation. When appropriate I am happy to share it with my friends and family. On the other hand, your journal cries out to be read by a wider audience. Your experiences tell a remarkable story about the early history of the English settlements in New England. Interwoven is your own description of your coming of age and the extraordinary adventures you have had. You must continue to write it.”

After supper, Annie and I returned to the Sun. Next morning, having brought my journal entries up to date, they were dispatched by messenger to Will. Annie and I left Dorchester on Tess and Mad-die. We had planned to take two days to get to Exeter. Thereafter, we would head for Plymouth where our dear children awaited.

— CHAPTER 19 —

A shout, a shot, something plucked at my sleeve and a further shout. I slapped Tess on the rump with my reins and she leapt away, Annie barely hanging on. I turned Maddie and drove her at a cluster of indistinct figures in the misty morning. My attack diverted them from the fleeing Annie. The figures, now distinct, scattered and then gathered, clutching at me. My sword caught in my cloak. I was hauled down and a pistol pressed hard against my throat.

“Don’t move. Put down your sword.”

I did.

“Get up with your arms above your head, slowly.”

Four disheveled men circled me. The ringleader was a thin young man with a hungry face, matted dark hair, scraggy beard, aggressive, pistol ready in one hand, leaning heavily on a crude crutch. He gestured with his pistol and I was grabbed and my hands tied behind my back by his nervous accomplices. The ringleader was the only person that mattered. I watched him. He was in a quandary. My riding companion had escaped, no doubt to fetch help but the nearest village was some miles away. He needed to deal with me, take my possessions and then abscond with his followers. I supposed he had to have a horse as it seemed he could barely walk. How the hell did he get here? He told his men to take me into a copse of trees.

“What are you going to do?” one of them asked.

“Kill him, strip and hide the body. We take everything.”

He raised his pistol. His men moved away from me. A mounted



figure loomed behind them.

“Caleb, you bastard. Put that pistol down.”

The ringleader spun round.

“Annie? What the fuck are you doing here?”

Annie had my unloaded, spare pistol in her hand.

“Drop it or I will kill you.”

Caleb dropped it.

“Untie him.”

I was untied. Picking up sword and pistol I moved to Annie, looking like I had never seen her, formidable astride Tess. I peered up at her.

“You certainly know some interesting people.”

Annie was not amused. She ordered Caleb and his men away from the trees and to sit in a huddle. I approached the despondent group.

“Well now, Caleb. Boot on the other hoof, so to speak. Who are you? How the hell did you get here? Where were you headed?”

Caleb didn't respond to any of my questions. None of them did. With their leader deflated, they looked even more wretched. I noticed one who looked like a child, sniveling.

“You, come here.”

The lad slowly rose and shambled towards me like a cur to be beaten.

“Annie, take this boy out of earshot and find out what the hell they are up to.”

That left three of them. The mist was lifting. I looked around. Off to one side was a two-wheel hand cart with a long T-shaped shaft. I told the two followers to go and fetch the cart. They returned and I told them to put Caleb into it, tie his wrists together, and move well away. Caleb suffered the indignities with ill-grace, cursing them until I warned him off. While I was pondering, Annie called to me. Her interrogation revealed that the group had been in trouble at Widecombe, instigated by Caleb. They had escaped and somehow Caleb had convinced them that their salvation lay in helping him to get to a refuge near Exeter, so they had been pulling him there in the

cart. It was by chance we came across them and Caleb had seized the moment to try and rob a couple of unsuspecting travelers and gain a much faster form of transport. With a horse there would be no reason to continue with his little band and I had to believe they would have been abandoned to fend for themselves. I needed to sort this out and find out where Annie and Caleb fitted in to the picture. I took each of the followers in turn and got them to tell me all their names and what villages they came from. Too scared to lie, they corroborated each other. I told them if I came across any of them misbehaving again I would have their guts out and to get the hell out of my sight. They left hurriedly. I then turned to Caleb.

“You, my friend, are returning to Widecombe with us.”

Muttering abuse Caleb flopped down in the cart to block out his miserable world.

I rigged up a harness attaching the T of the shaft to the backs of our saddles so the shaft ran between Maddie and Tess. I tied Caleb securely into the cart and off we rode.

“Now, Mrs. Stanfield, you have something to tell me.”

Annie, with an occasional glance back at our prisoner, began her story.

“Caleb Tremont is the younger son of my late aunt, the one me and James went to Totnes to be with while you were away. The elder son, Seth, had come to Plymouth to plead with me to go back with him as his mother was dying. Against my will, but feeling it was my family duty I went, expecting to return within a week to Plymouth. When we arrived in Totnes the aunt was in bed in the squalid kitchen, unable to rise, in a continuing foul temper. The house was a pigsty and the two sons, Seth and Caleb, were useless.”

“Hold on, Annie. This is like the start of a horror story. Why have you kept it to yourself?”

She looked at me askance. Then, “You probably don’t remember but when we got back together again and you were recovering from your pirate adventure, I told you where I’d been and said I had no interest in ever talking about it again. Now, if I may continue?”

“Sorry.”

“I demanded a room of our own for me and James. A room was cleared which I had to scrub clean and set up a straw mattress with clean bedclothes. With that done the kitchen was next. It was apparent I needed to clean my aunt too. I sent Seth and Caleb to find a large basin and fill it with hot water, found a cloth, banished the boys and, despite the screams of abuse, stripped my aunt and washed her down. While she huddled in a blanket on a chair by the fire, I washed the bedsheets and put her to bed. There was little food in the house. The sons were sent off with a list of essentials to buy. Although frail, their mother terrified them into submission and ordered them to do as I required.”

I was impressed and said so. Annie smiled and continued with her story. James made friends with local children. He was taken away from the house to spend the day with the children’s families and was happy. Annie only having time for him occasionally, and every evening they went for a long walk together. Days passed and under Annie’s care, the aunt seemed to get better. With that she became even more of a shrew, cursing everyone and everything. Annie, too, was able to spend a little time with friendly neighbors, although they tended to keep their distance in fear of the terrible Tremonts. A week or so on, matters got worse. The sons had kept out of Annie’s way as much as possible and had ignored James. As long as their mother was aware they behaved themselves. Then the mother began to fade. She slept more and more. Seth began to pay more attention to Annie. He made suggestive remarks, eyed her in a most brazen way and began touching her. She took to wearing heavy clothing that covered her from neck to foot. One night, she woke to find him in her room. As he leant over her, she grabbed the knife she kept under her pillow and stuck it under his chin.

“Come near me again and I will cut your balls off! I want you out of the house as long as I am here. If I see you here tomorrow morning I will leave you and your bloody family.”

The next morning he had gone. A day of relative peace and then

Caleb started. Quiet while Seth dominated proceedings but with big brother gone, he began to lord it. Nothing obvious—more of a malevolent presence. Warned off any overt approach by Annie, he made life miserable. First little things, fire extinguished with a bucket of water making it difficult to relight, her bedding sodden, milk container overturned on the kitchen floor. Then one day matters got worse. James ran screaming into the kitchen crying that Caleb had attacked him with a burning branch. Annie went on the attack, launching herself at Caleb with a long fire poker. Caleb backed off, taunting her. Annie threatened him with serious damage if he came anywhere near James. He laughed and walked away, returning that evening as if nothing had happened. His mother was awake and he was being dutifully attentive. Annie could do nothing. So it went on.

Annie was becoming exceedingly stressed and tired. She felt defenseless, protecting James, attempting to look after her aunt and being hounded by a deranged man. The neighbors helped a little but they wanted nothing to do with the family. The day after the aunt died, James came sobbing to Annie carrying a dead puppy that he had befriended. It had been strangled and gutted and hung on a gate post behind the house. Annie went out and found Caleb with a smirk on his face. She went back in grabbed the poker and advanced on Caleb in cold fury. He laughed and backed off. No words spoken, she launched herself at him and brought the poker down as hard as she could on his left knee. Caleb collapsed, howling in pain.

As soon as the aunt died, Annie had sent a desperate plea to her brother to rescue her and James. He arrived to fetch them the following day. Once safely away at her brother's house, Annie collapsed from nervous exhaustion, only recovering when told that I had returned and was in need. Her stay with her brother had its own set of problems, but by now Annie said she had had enough of the memories. By the time she had finished I was enraged. I stopped the horses, dismounted, and stood looking down at Caleb. He cowered in the cart, whimpering. What a miserable wretch. I remounted, hugged Annie and told her how much I loved her and how sorry I was that

my selfishness had caused her so much pain and unhappiness.

“Silly, dear boy. I would have gone to help my aunt whether or not you had been there. They are a bad family, God help them all.”

But despite her brave face, in the telling Annie had become most upset. She missed the children and was reminded of the unhappy time she and James had endured with Seth and Caleb. When we arrived in Widecombe, I sought out the duty watchman and handed over Caleb. He was pleased to have him back. He would send for the Exeter bailiff and have Caleb confined there until such time as he could be tried for a number of capital offences, including theft and grievous bodily harm. This incident had set us back on our journey home, but we made good time to Exeter and the following morning left early in heavy mist to cross Dartmoor and get as close to Plymouth as we could before dark. We spent one more night on the road some 10 miles from Plymouth at Buckland Monachorum at Sir Francis Drake’s Inn and arrived home by 10:00 next morning. Jeannie was pleased to see us, worried that we hadn’t returned the previous day. James and Abigail were delighted, needless to say. We had been away five days and it seemed like a month.

## — CHAPTER 20 —

### Journal entry—July 1624

I went to see Mr. Scroud two days after our return to take some serious steps towards a final decision about *Swallow*. Ned had already delivered his costs schedule. *Rosie* was due back any day now and I expected Richard to return within a week. A meeting with the Skipper and Richard would help us estimate costs for a variety of services that *Swallow* might provide. Mr. Scroud had been asking his business contacts about the type of services *Swallow* might be best suited for. He said he had been pleasantly surprised at the response. The speed of delivery was the crucial element. He asked me about a final inspection and I gave him the name of a local boat builder and surveyor to consult. As to the rest of my affairs, I was informed that I could take comfort in my current financial situation.

The following week, the three partners of the *Sweet Rose* met in Mr. Scroud's office to discuss *Swallow*. We reached an understanding of estimated service costs and possible revenue and had accumulated a list of merchants and others that might be interested in using those services. We then turned our attention to *Rosie*. Isaiah had reached the bittersweet conclusion that it was time for him to "come ashore". As a non-operating part owner he was concerned about who should replace him as Skipper. Peg Jones had stated that he would not serve under any other captain nor did he consider himself as a possible

replacement. He would retire. J.B. was considered, but it was felt he needed a few more years, preferably first mate of a smaller vessel; like *Swallow*, I suggested. They laughed and nodded—like *Swallow*. Isaiah said that he knew someone who he felt would be suitable and, if appointed, would probably want to recruit his own first and second mates, probably bosun, too. He would introduce him to us for consideration.

There was necessary repair work to be done on *Rosie*. It was an inconvenient time, since summer was a busy time for merchantmen. Skipper said the boatyard had estimated two weeks to complete replacement of the main mast and deal with some leaks below the waterline. He would use the time ashore to work with us to find his replacement. There was the question of *Rosie*'s age. Built in 1607 with an expected useful life of 20 years, in theory, that meant she had three more years of active use. However, the latest survey had shown her to have weathered well. She had been well cared for with an excellent ship's carpenter who was a permanent member of the crew. While she was docked Skipper would have the yard do another thorough survey, but he had the firm belief she was good for another five years, minimum.

The following day I met with John Gorges to discuss purchase of *Swallow*. He said that there had been some tentative enquiries. He was beginning to settle on a price in the vicinity of £200. I expressed some surprise, as that was close to the valuation put on *Rosie*. He responded that *Rosie* was an older boat with fewer years left to her. *Swallow* had a number of interesting characteristics that gave her an almost exotic aura, admittedly, to be shied away from by more prosaic ship owners. We talked through the opportunities and risks. John suggested a number of prospective business contacts. He confirmed that he, as acting Governor of the Fort, would contract with me for a regular monthly courier and delivery service between Plymouth and south coast ports, possibly as far as London. We parted company with my promise that we would be back to him as soon as we had completed our own preparations as well as cost and revenue

projections. I had signed a provisional agreement with him, in my capacity as the majority investor, confirming my intention to put together a group of minority investors to purchase *Swallow* with final purchase price to be determined and agreed on, pending the final inspection that Scroud was arranging with the surveyor.

The inspection was carried out three days later which I attended. It was thorough. I became familiar with every corner of the boat. A list of defects was prepared, none particularly serious nor necessary to address before the purchase was completed. At the same time Ned had prepared a full inventory of the contents to be included. Where were the guns that were on *Swallow* when she was captured? This would need to be dealt with. Inshore coastal work was not a problem but offshore we would need armament.

A further meeting with my fellow shareholders: Richard Bushrode had agreed to be a 24.5% shareholder. Henri Giradeau had also taken a 24.5% share. I would take 51%. I had previously approached Henri to enquire whether he knew of a suitable person in the Huguenot community who might wish to invest in *Swallow*. He asked many pertinent questions and after several hours detailed explanation of our various cost and revenue analyses, had expressed interest in becoming a shareholder, subject to a satisfactory inspection and knowledge of who his fellow investors were. We ended the meeting in happy agreement, a handshake and a toast with Henri's best cognac. The following day I met with John Gorges and completed the purchase agreement. We settled on a price of £220 to include the guns in storage under the supervision of the Navy ordnance officer. Ned was informed and shortly thereafter met with the new owners to negotiate his terms of service.

During the month of July while I had been actively engaged in the intricacies of boat ownership, Annie had quickly settled into domestic bliss. Coming home every evening with no long trips on the horizon, I reveled in the peace, comfort, and loving atmosphere. The house was in fine shape. The architectural changes Annie had supervised a while back had melded with the rest of the house, so we



barely remembered what it had been like. One evening when I returned home, the table had been set for two with Annie's best dinner service, a candle lit and a bottle of burgundy opened. A celebration?

"Isaac, sit."

I sat and poured a glass for each of us.

"Isaac, my love. It seems I am pregnant."

I leapt to my feet, knocking the table and spilling both glasses of wine. With whoop of delight I gathered Annie in my arms and danced with her round the room. After the initial excitement had worn off, we sat down, refilled our glasses and toasted each other with arms linked.

"When are you due?"

"February, according to Sarah Winstanley."

Doing my sums, I laughed.

"It must have been the night I returned from New England."

I spent time with James and Abigail walking on the Hoe. Abigail preferred being carried, but James had become a fearless, tireless adventurer. By my side one minute, disappearing with a clump of friends the next, then reappearing somewhere else a few minutes later. He was invariably filthy from rolling in the mud, wrestling, exploring. It was a joy to watch him. I realized that I needed to start teaching him how to defend himself. He was four, nearly five. Big for his age, fleet of foot, strong but desperately uncoordinated. Jeannie, who normally went with James on his walks, must have a terrible time keeping up with him. I took James with me to exercise Maddie. I held Maddie's reins with James sitting astride the saddle, clutching the pommel. Maddie, now more sedate at 13 years old, moved gently, knowing she had precious cargo aboard. We progressed to trotting with me running alongside ready to catch the bouncing boy. James quickly got the hang of it. A good exercise to learn coordination.

When the children were abed, with the ever-watchful Jeannie babysitting, in the early evening Annie and I would ride frequently leaving the dirt and smells of Plymouth behind to spend a happy hour or two alone together. These days were unforgettable, my focus

now on Plymouth and my career as a local businessman and boat owner. I had been fortunate in that regard. A wife I adored, who I was lucky to have love me, two children healthy and strong. A third on the way. Life is good. Long may it continue.

## — CHAPTER 21 —

### **Journal entry—September 1624**

*Swallow*, fully functional, repairs completed, was already in active service. J.B. had been appointed First Mate, to the mutual satisfaction of Ned and himself. They quickly became friendly and respectful of each other's skills and experience. Obi was brought in as bosun's mate with the expectation that with more experience he had every chance to be made bosun. However, we needed a bosun. I had occasion to make a trip on *Swallow*, late in September. The primary purpose was to experience an extended voyage on her and I wanted to see how the additional crew members were shaking down. The two-week trip was planned to take me as far as London. David Tremaine was in Weymouth and sent word that he needed to see me, so I replied with a note that I would pick him up on the way. David was quayside when we arrived. Some packages were delivered ashore and David came aboard. He was long of face and said little while *Swallow* made ready for sea. Once under sail, we retired to the main cabin and David told me his tale.

Sadly, he and Kate were at odds. David was simply not a farmer. Kate had a fearsome temper and had been less than sympathetic. Matters quickly became worse and the only option was for David to pack his bags and leave. Thank God, they had reached this point before they married. The children were being badly affected by the

atmosphere and with David gone matters could settle back to what they had been. He was wretched about the whole affair.

I was called topside. We had cleared Portland Bill and Ned told me that it looked like a heavy squall was approaching from the East. Sails were reduced and orders were given to prepare for heavy weather. The first squall hit us and, prepared as we were, *Swallow* broached and was laid on her beam. Ned ordered the helm eased and we headed southwest to run before the storm, main reefed, jib doused, under storm trys'l. Then another squall hit us. The trys'l exploded into flapping strips of canvas, the larboard outer shroud parted, and the main mast was seriously threatened. Obi, acting as bosun, was quickly overwhelmed. Without asking, David leapt into action and between them ensured Ned's orders were competently executed, mains'l doused and we were running bare poled. The storm passed and we limped back to Plymouth, now the closest port to us. We made our way to the Pool. David and I disembarked to leave the crew, luckily uninjured, to tidy up and make repairs. On our way home, I asked David whether he would take the position of bosun on *Swallow*. He smiled and said he would think about it.

At the front door I was met by an ashen, tearful Jeannie.

"Jeannie, what's wrong?"

"Oh sir, it's James. He's gone missing. I was on the Hoe with him and he disappeared, only he didn't come back. I was frantic. I looked everywhere. I came home to tell Mrs. Stanfield and she left me with Abigail and has gone looking for him."

I turned and, with David, ran to the Hoe.

## — CHAPTER 22 —

I saw the distant figure of Annie at the far side of the grassy swath of Plymouth Hoe walking the cliff edge, searching. David Tremaine and I ran to her. She turned at the sound of our feet, expression grim. She brightened for a moment and then drooped into my arms.

“Thank God you’re here. I didn’t expect you back for a fortnight, or more. James has gone missing.”

“We’ve just come from the house. Jeannie told us.”

Annie had been looking for about 30 minutes when we arrived. It was evening and most of the children had gone home. She had asked the one minder that was still there if she had been aware of anything. She was told that the children were scattered over the Hoe playing in groups, girls sitting making daisy chains, the boys playing games. Maybe a dozen children.

“How many minders were there?”

“Five or six, including Jeannie.”

“Did they know that James was missing?”

“Not really. Jeannie had done a quick search and then it seemed she panicked and ran for me. By the time I got here, almost everyone had gone. There were other people walking about and I asked them if they had seen James. They hadn’t.”

We agreed to do a thorough search in case James had fallen down or was hiding somewhere. Dividing the perimeter, cliff top and the whole area of the Hoe into three, each of us spent the next hour searching and calling for the boy with no success. Trying to ignore

the sickening feeling of dread, I started working out our options.

“He’s not here, so he has either wandered off or someone has taken him. If he’d wandered off, surely he would be back by now? Annie, has he ever done this before?”

“Never, he is too sociable, always playing with his friends.”

David suggested we inform the night watch that James was missing, and to let us know as soon as he is found while we return home to Whimple Street and plan our next steps. Back at home, the night watch informed, we were now seriously alarmed. Jeannie nearly hysterical, kept repeating it wasn’t her fault. He had simply disappeared.

“I know, Jeannie. Just tell us what you remember.”

With our frequent attempts to keep her focused, Jeannie described the scene. James playing with a group of boys, hide and seek. He had hidden a couple of times, had been found by his friends and the game had continued. It was clear that Jeannie’s attention had wandered as she had been in lively conversation with one of her fellow minders. It was only as the children started gathering to go home that she realized James was no longer part of the group.

“Did you ask the boys if they had seen James?”

“They said they had tried looking for him but he was too well hidden so they gave up.”

It was then that Jeannie had done her frantic search and ran for help. I said,

“We need to know who all the children were and their minders, especially the boys James was playing with. Then we have to find out what they might have seen.”

Annie added, “This needs to be done delicately. I don’t want the children to be frightened into silence or to give wrong information. I think I should handle that one.”

Jeannie was coaxed into giving us the names of all the minders. How long she had known them, how reliable they were, in her opinion, and which children they were minding. Annie was able to provide additional information as she had frequently been on the Hoe herself with James and Abigail. Jeannie was asked whether there

had been anyone else there that might have taken some interest in the children, but she hadn't noticed. That evening, Annie and I, armed with our list, went out to interview the minders and parents of James' playmates. We tried to remain calm, but it was rough. We were ragged when we finished.

Returning home, where David had done his best to console Jeannie, we discussed what we had found. Jeannie's account had been confirmed, although she had missed a few more regulars who had been there. Each had provided some idea of where they had been and where they thought the others were in the hour before leaving for home. They had been aware that Jeannie was upset but figured James was dawdling. However, it helped pinpoint the period of time during which James had disappeared. It turned out there had been one woman who was not known to the others. She had been on the Hoe for several days but had tended to keep to herself. She seemed to be part of the children's groups but didn't seem to have any children of her own to look after. This information was corroborated by other minders. Her name was given as Ruth but little more was known. We had a description and we needed to find her.

Next morning after a sleepless night, I went door to door with David looking for Ruth or someone who knew more about her, while Annie went to talk to the children at their homes. David and I were unsuccessful. Annie had had more luck. One of the boys had remained silent and his mother asked him what he was hiding, clearly having something to tell. Eventually, he admitted that a lady had approached him a day or so previously and asked him to point out James. She had made him promise not to tell anyone under threat of a good whipping. She said she was James' big sister and she had a surprise for him, which she didn't want spoiled. He was only able to give a vague description and that she was about the age of his sister who was 18. David and I went further afield seeking her and Annie went to the Minerva. One of the pot scrubbers there, Pete Bishop, was in a gang of young scamps—stable boys, urchins and hangers on—who knew every alleyway and hidey hole in Plymouth.

They were sometimes useful in finding people who didn't want to be found. Annie organized Pete and his young friends to form search parties to look for James and Ruth. She persuaded them that this was a major mission for which they would be rewarded. It was the gang that brought success. Ruth had been found, at least, where she had been staying, although no longer there. She had disappeared the night James had gone missing. However, she had friends there and they had been identified. Annie and I went looking for those friends at an address in a dismal part of Plymouth beyond Sutton Pool. A slattern came at our knocking. She said she had never heard of Ruth. We described her.

"Who wants to know?"

I produced half a crown. Her eyes gleamed. Ruth had stayed there once or twice but was now gone.

"Was she by herself when she left?"

"No, she had a little boy with her. Come to think of it the boy was unhappy to be with her, but was treated roughly and forced to go with her."

I felt myself going cold, grim faced and threatening. Annie saw the look and touched my sleeve. The slattern backed away terrified.

"Where is she now?"

"I don't know, sir," she stammered. "Only that she couldn't wait to dump the boy and get her payment. Then they was gone."

"What do you mean, *dump the boy*?"

"Some man paid her to get the boy?"

"Do you know where they've gone?"

"No."

"Who's the man?"

"Don't know, but I think he comes from Totnes."

Annie started. "Totnes, where my aunt lived."

"Can you describe him?"

She thought he was in his twenties, thin with dark hair and a ragged beard. Didn't know his name.

With nothing else gained of value, offering a reward if she found



out more, we walked home. Annie mused.

“Could this have anything to do with cousin Seth? The description fits and he certainly has no love for us, especially after we recaptured Caleb and sent him to a probable hanging.”

At home, we agreed that David and I would go down to Totnes. Abigail wailed for Annie’s attention. I had forgotten in my anxiety that Annie was carrying another child. She had to focus on her family now and on what was to come.

## — CHAPTER 23 —

We rode to Totnes, David leaving me to my silent brooding. Early evening we stabled the horses and walked to Annie's aunt's house. No one seemed to be there and the house looked as if it had been deserted for some time. I had met a neighbor when I had been down looking for Annie two years previously. I wondered if she was still around. She was and vaguely remembered me, but had a clearer memory of Annie and James. I asked what had become of Seth after the old lady had died. She told me, after Annie and James' departure Seth stayed in the house off and on but hadn't been seen for months. Caleb, she said, had vanished. Had she seen a woman of 18 called Ruth? She had, a friend of Seth's and, presumably, with him as no sight of her since he disappeared. Were there friends of Seth she might know about? She shrugged and suggested we visited a rough and ready tavern called the Anchor down the hill near the river, where people like Seth tended to frequent. She warned us to be careful. I thanked her and we went to the Anchor. Dark, dismal, a few leaded windows, a pane or two broken. A couple of misbegottens on a bench outside glowered at us as we entered. Low ceiling, blackened by smoke and the grime of many years past. A bearded, filthy, fat, scarred man was behind the bar. Before I could say anything, the man swore at me and told me to piss off out of there. I muttered to David, "Watch my back."

Then leaning across the bar, I grabbed the man by his shirt and slapped his face hard back and forward, hauled him over the bar.

With my sword at his throat, I asked him about Seth. He had been there a week or so previously. He had said he would shortly be going on a long trip—a sea trip to America. He had sold his aunt's house was staying in Dartmouth from where he would be sailing, if he hadn't already left. Ruth had been with him but no sight nor sound of any kid.

“Where in Dartmouth?”

“The Pig and Whistle.”

I rode back to Plymouth while David rode to Dartmouth to see what he could find. While David and I were away, Annie had had luck of her own. Pete had been to tell her that Ruth had been seen and her whereabouts known. Annie had left Abigail with a friend, in Jeannie's absence, and accompanied by Pete and members of his gang had gone in search and found her. At first denying any involvement, Ruth eventually broke down and swore at Seth's memory, saying he had deserted her and sailed for Virginia. Seth wanted Ruth to go with him and became abusive when she refused. What about James? She said that Seth had told her that James was his son from a previous relationship. He seemed to know a lot about him, so Ruth, wanting to believe him, had agreed to help him get James back from the wicked people who had taken him. When she took James to Seth it was clear that James wanted nothing to do with him, but by that time it was too late. Ruth was bribed to stay silent. As far as she knew James was still with Seth. Annie was aghast. In her misery, she accused Ruth of kidnapping, punishable by death. Ruth, now petrified, promised anything and everything in her power to make amends. What that might be was unknowable.

David returned from Dartmouth around 2:00pm. He found out that a man fitting Seth's description had occasionally been seen with a woman but had disappeared at about the time the sailing vessel *Concord* had left a few days earlier, apparently for America. However, the man's name was Sly, not Seth. It was not known whether he had a child or woman with him when he left.

The authorities were informed and Ruth was taken into custody,

to plead her case of unsuspecting accomplice. A weak defense, our minds were elsewhere. So it was now clear that Sly and Seth were one and the same. According to the Dartmouth harbor master, the *Concord's* manifest had been recorded in Weymouth, whither we would need to go to find out if Seth had in fact sailed with the *Concord*.

Two days later, *Swallow* left for Southampton. Ned dropped David and me off at Weymouth, saying he would be back the next day. From the Customs collector's Port Book we found out that the *Concord* manifest stated that the ship was not headed for Jamestown but Bermuda. I turned to David.

"Bermuda? What? Why?"

"Isaac, keep your focus. We need to find out more about the *Concord* and its passengers."

Its manifest included a passenger list. There was no indication of anyone that might fit Seth's and James names and description. The passengers were families with a number of indentured single men, included as part of specific family groups, all of whom had joined the *Concord* in London. Who was to join the vessel in Dartmouth? According to the manifest, there were three families, father and mother each with one child. No single men with or without a child. Family names Cooper with a son called Peter; Smith with a daughter named Leah; and Clark with a son named Samuel. We only had the not particularly reliable word of the barman at the Anchor that Seth and James had boarded the *Concord*. After a day's search, we were able to trace a merchant who was invested in the *Concord*. He told us she had been chartered by the Somers Isles Company. I knew a little of the company, formed some years previously as a part of the Virginia Company but now with its own charter to settle Bermuda. I thought of Bermuda as little more than an island in the Atlantic where ships were wrecked periodically. The merchant laughed at my ignorance.

"Mr. Stanfield, you will be surprised to learn that there are now more than 1000 settlers in Bermuda. Much has happened since Sir George Somers was shipwrecked there in 1609. It has become a thriving colony and a major exporter of tobacco."

“A thousand settlers? Surely, it is tiny island. How could they possibly sustain themselves? Aren’t there hurricanes and dangerous reefs?”

“No, sir. Would you believe that the island is infested with wild hogs? In the last century, pirates or Spanish visitors, possibly Juan de Bermudez himself, left hogs there to multiply and be a source of food for future visitors. Anyway, to your enquiry—the *Concord* is carrying supplies and additional settlers to Bermuda. From thence it will sail on to Jamestown. The Somers Isles Company is keen to send whole families there to settle permanently. The land has been divided between over a hundred shareholders who are required to have the parcels they own cleared, settled, and productive or they will lose their ownership rights. People come and people go. New settlers are always needed.”

If Seth was on board, he was travelling under a different name with a made-up family. He had stolen a child and, if Ruth was to be believed, had found a woman companion who acted the wife. But why Bermuda? Not to settle, surely? Something smelt bad and James was caught up in it. However, I still didn’t really know where he was. I had to find him. If he was at sea, go after him. I wanted to know more about the Somers Isles Company. I wondered if Sir Ferdinando or John Gorges knew anything about it.

We sailed back to Plymouth on *Swallow*. With the wind, fresh from the South on a clear day, the morning sun reflected off the waves and *Swallow* coursing through the water, forced my mind away from my missing son, if but for a brief span—the suppressed hiss and rumble of the wash being pushed aside, combined with the constant chatter of taut halyards against the mast, the snap of the sails as the wind backed and filled, accompanied by the hum and whistle of the changing currents of air through the rigging.

I thought about David joining the crew. He needed a steady wage. J.B. and Obi had transferred from *Rosie* and had settled in well. David was much over-experienced to be bosun. With Ned as Skipper, J.B. as First Mate, and Obi as bosun’s mate, there was not much

spare leadership capacity. I would need to discuss this further when I could put my mind to it. One thing was clear, David loved *Swallow* and was delighted to back at sea.

Back home at Whimple Street, Annie, deeply depressed but trying to maintain a steady calm for Abigail, hung on our description of what we had been up to. Apparently Ruth had been released. I expressed surprise. Annie said that Pete Bishop, in whom she had great faith, had suggested that Ruth free was of much greater value than in prison, as she almost certainly knew more than she was admitting to and much could be learned from following her. As a result, Annie had not chosen to demand retribution and in the absence of further evidence there was little to keep Ruth locked up. But she was now under constant watch by the “gang”.

Time for another visit to the house beyond Sutton Pool. Annie sent a note to Pete to meet me at the Minerva first thing in the morning. The next day, David and I met Pete, a small, dirty boy with eyes that had seen the sludge of life. He was wise beyond his years and as we walked round the Pool, he told us what he had found out. The house that Seth had used was not far from a much more salubrious house to which Ruth had been followed. It was a meeting place for a number of people that seemed not to have much in common with each other. They weren't exactly furtive in the way they came and went but they were careful. Some of them appeared to come from normal circumstances. Some were poor and others not so. Not wanting to be seen associating with us, Pete described the house and its location and quietly disappeared. It was just off the Pool. It had an imposing facade, was well maintained and seemed to be owned by someone of some social standing—possibly a merchant. I knocked on the front door, which was opened by a servant. Without a word, he ushered us into a front parlor, furnished with a few chairs grouped around an empty hearth, and left us. A short time later there was a knock on the door and a wisp of a man came in, thin to a shadow, a large head, keen eyes under bushy eyebrows with a noble brow. He was dressed as a clergyman.

“Good day, sirs. How can I help you?”

“A friend suggested we come to the house. He said you might be able to help us. My name is Isaac Stanfield and this is David Tremaine.”

I shook his outstretched hand. David did likewise but otherwise kept in the background. The man introduced himself.

“My name is the Reverend Joseph Spurling. I am assuming that your friend sent you to me because of your interest in America.”

I nodded, keeping my surprise to myself.

“Are you interested in travelling to America or are you enquiring on behalf of others?”

“We are interested in the possibilities.”

Mr. Spurling smiled somewhat sadly.

“Your response is a little cryptic. I’m not sure how I can help you?”

He was being cautious—why? I wondered if he might be involved in something the authorities would frown on. Was he offering a means for disaffected Anglicans to join their Separatist brethren in New England?

“I am sorry, Mr. Spurling. I must be open with you. I have an interest in moving to America. I have some concerns about how the Church views my faith.”

“Ah! Perhaps you would like to move to New Plimouth?”

“No, I feel their brand of Puritanism is a little strong for me.”

“Do you have a family?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Would you be wanting to travel as a family?”

“Yes.”

“Have you considered going to Jamestown?”

“I’m not sure. It seems dangerous there and it appears a bit too secular.”

Mr. Spurling nodded. “Did your friend explain what we do here?”

“No. Only that it would be worth my while to talk to you.”

“May I ask who your friend is?”

I thought for a moment. Mr. Spurling took my silence to be reticence to give names.

“Mr. Stanfield, we must be careful to protect the interests of the people who use our services.”

I gave a slight bow in acknowledgement, and hoping the Patriarch would forgive me using his name, said, “Rector John White.”

“Ah! Mr. White of Dorchester. He is known to me, a good man. I am gratified he seems to support what we are doing.”

“I’m afraid Mr. White was circumspect when he advised me to talk to you. I am much in the dark about the service you offer.”

Mr. Spurling seemed to relax. He motioned us to sit.

“Some years ago, significant settlement began in Bermuda. The Company of Somers Isles was founded to further that settlement and establish a strong commercial footing there for the benefit of the Company’s investors. It was noted that having only a commercial interest in the settlement put it at risk—based on the unfortunate experiences in Virginia and Jamestown. The investors being for the most part London-based ensured that the settlement was provided with the religious leadership of Anglican clergy. Most of the settlers are families that come from the areas around London. They are indentured for the most part. In addition, there are those that are swept up from the poor houses and destitute to make up the numbers that the investors need to work their properties there. However, among the investors there are some that have decided to introduce a small number of Puritan families into the Bermuda settlement process in hopes of fostering a stable, harder working, more reliable and permanent element. I was asked to find families that fit this need and obtain free passage for them to Bermuda. I was told that only complete families should be found. That way, they would arrive committed to settle with a level of self-sufficiency and motivation to remain as active, productive, and permanent members of that new community.”

“How many families do you send?”

“Our latest group consisted of three families who boarded the *Concord* in Dartmouth and left some days ago.”



“I see. So, if I wanted to go to Bermuda alone I would not be able to use your services?”

“No, you would need to deal with the Company directly in London and you would almost certainly have to pay your own passage, unless you were prepared to sign a seven-year agreement as an indentured servant. In which case, the Company or one of its investors would own you for those seven years.”

“I have a child. His mother died a while back. Would I be able to use your service?”

“You might, but there would need to be a special exception made. It would mean we would need to look closely at your circumstances and background.”

I wondered whether I should ask about Seth. I doubted I would gain any more knowledge than I already had and it would cause suspicions to be raised. I had introduced myself as an interested potential customer with no knowledge of the service Mr. Spurling offered. Why would I suddenly ask about a passenger already on the high seas?

“If I was accepted where would I be departing from?”

“We tend to use Dartmouth, although not necessarily. It is a convenient harbor for those who wish to remain inconspicuous. There is an inn there which is useful.”

I laughed. “Surely not the Pig and Whistle?”

Mr. Spurling smiled ruefully. “I have had dealings in the past with that disreputable establishment. No. it is the George.”

“Thank you, Mr. Spurling. You have been most helpful. We need to return to our families and discuss what we have learned. Tell me, how long do we have before the next vessel sails for Bermuda?”

“I believe it is the *Mary Evans* out of Bristol—Captain Walter Morris. Not due to sail for a month or more. I can check for a more accurate departure date nearer the time.”

I smiled inwardly. My old friend Walter Morris. David and I made our farewells to Mr. Spurling and returned home discussing what we had learned.

“David, we have uncovered a strong reason for Seth to find a family so he can leave England, but why the urgency? Also, we still don’t know for sure that one of those three families boarding in Dartmouth included him and James. Another thing, I never found out how Ruth fits into this.”

Back home, Annie, increasingly haggard with large shadows under her eyes, said she had heard back from Pete Bishop. They had been keeping a close eye on Ruth. It seemed she had worked at Mr. Spurling’s establishment. That explained how Seth would have found out about the voyage to Bermuda and the restrictions on who could go. We needed confirmation that Seth and James were on the *Concord*. We needed to find out why Seth was in such a hurry to leave England. There had to be more than his desire to emigrate. Why was it so urgent that he manufactured a wife and stole a child to do so? David volunteered to track Seth’s movements and activities. Annie wanted to get out of the house and agreed to have a talk with Ruth. Between them they might find what had driven Seth. I needed to go back to Dartmouth. Annie made us a quick lunch and we went our separate ways. I said I doubted I would be back till the morrow. Taking heed of David’s advice, I prepared by taking workmen’s clothes.

As I rode to Dartmouth I thought about how I could gain the certainty I needed that James was aboard the *Concord*. I had to find out about the woman that Seth had persuaded to accompany them as his wife and James’ mother. Perhaps I could act the distraught brother seeking his lost sister. I didn’t know her name. But then, she could have changed her name or be known by another.

I went first to the Cherub where Aby and I had stayed. It must have been five years ago, just before James was born. I stabled Maddie and booked myself a room. I changed my clothing and left my sword and money purse. No working man would be carrying such a weapon. In somber mood, with a few coins in my pocket I walked through Dartmouth down to the Pig and Whistle. Mr. Spurling was right, not an inn for God-fearing folk. It had a sour unwashed,

piss-sodden atmosphere. There was a barmaid leaning over the bar talking to a customer, her bosom falling out of her dress. The delighted customer's eyes never left the cleavage and if they did a quick wiggle by the barmaid and an over-ripe nipple appeared, to be casually put back. It seemed they were negotiating a price. My arrival interrupted the proceedings. The barmaid, tiring of the process, saw me as a more likely customer and transferred her attention.

"Yes? Good sir. How can I help you?"

"A tankard of ale, if you please."

"Would there be anything else?"

She leant towards me, breasts to the fore. The surrounds of her eyes were caked in some kind of black paint. Her lips overwhelmed with more red paint and her pitted cheeks powdered and rouged.

"Well maybe there might. Would you join me for a drink? Perhaps we could chat at a table in the corner over there,"

She with a large gin and I with my tankard were soon settled. Her name she said was Belinda, or Lind to her friends.

"Lind, my dear. I have a sad story to tell. I can see you have a kind and compassionate heart. Would you care to hear me out?"

Lind, with a large gin to consume and the possibilities for further gain, was happy to listen. I launched into the sad story of my lost baby sister, Judith, Judy to her friends. The gist of my story was that a wild man had captured her heart and she had disappeared. While our family was happy that at long last she had found someone, we were worried. Judy was inclined to be headstrong and she had disappeared with some of the family wealth in the form of jewels that belonged to our mother. We were worried that her man, Seth, was more interested in the wealth than Judy. I laid the tale out in long, romantic detail. Lind was transfixed, even with tears in her eyes. I darren't look into her face. Black streaks were running down her cheeks. At the end, Lind put a hand on my arm and shaking her head in sympathy asked what it was that I wanted.

"Lind, my dear, I have been able to trace Judy and Seth to this area."

She looked blank. I tried again.

“I believe her man might go by the name of Sly.”

Lind jumped to her feet. “Sly?” she shouted. Several customers looked up at us.

“My God, the bastard. He owes me for lodging, food, and drink. He’s been gone a week. I had one of my friends look for him. He tracked him to a boat, the *Concord*, which had sailed by the time it was known where he had got to.”

“Was he by himself?”

“No, he had a doxy with him. Oops, sorry. Perhaps the lady was your sister. But her name wasn’t Judy. It was Dorothy. She had her son with her.”

“Son? My Judy had no child, are you sure?”

“Oh yes, a lad of about 4 or 5.”

My heart leapt to hear of James and then sank at the thought of his wretched condition. In response to my questions, Lind said that she had learned from her friend that Sly had indeed boarded the *Concord* with Dorothy and child shortly before it left.

“Do you know anything more about Dorothy? Where was she living before she left? Who was the boy? Perhaps this person was somebody else.”

Lind, captivated by the drama, gave me a description of Judy/Dorothy. In full flow she described the boy, with a few prompts from me. It was James, indeed. But a sad and sorry James. Lind said she thought he was a brave lad. Thinking about it, she said there was something odd about the whole relationship. Too confusing for her, she said. Her third glass of gin didn’t help much either. She became maudlin and I left her at the table with her head in her arms, sobbing at the unfairness of life. It was too late for me to ride back, but I desperately needed fresh air away from the Pig and Whistle’s fetid atmosphere. I walked through the rough neighborhood in the direction of the Cherub. A slight movement behind me and as I turned I was hit hard on the back of my head and everything went blank.

— CHAPTER 24 —

**Journal entry**—*October 1624*

It was dark when I regained my senses with a throbbing head, lying in straw with my arms tied behind me. I lay still trying to work out what had happened. I had been attacked and was now a captive, why? I had no idea. Sounds about me—a stable with horses and I was in an empty stall. My headache made it difficult to think or hear. In spite of my head I went back to sleep. I was woken by the sound of talking, close by. A covered lantern was now hanging from a post and I could make out shadows.

“He should be awake by now. Are you sure he’s alive?”

“He’s not awake, I checked. But he’s alive, breathing regular.”

“So, how long does he have to be watched?”

“Until Hook tells us otherwise.”

“Why don’t we just leave him? What does Hook want with him?”

“That’s for Hook to say.”

“Who is he?”

“Someone making enquiries about Sly. He was overheard talking to Lind.”

“Well, it’s your turn to watch. It’s late, I’m tired and I’m leaving.”

Footsteps receded. I closed my eyes as my new guard approached. The top and bottom doors to the stall were unbarred and opened. The guard nudged me with his foot and went away satisfied I was

alive and still unconscious. He barred the doors and settled down in the next stall, close enough to hear me if I moved. After a while, the man went to sleep, snoring loudly. I slowly rolled on to my front, got to my knees and then stood, looking for something sharp to free myself. Nothing in the stall but there must be a tack room near the stable door. I climbed onto a bale of hay in the corner of my stall, away from the snoring, and looked into another empty stall with its doors open. I leaned over the wall and swung my legs up and over, sliding none too gently into the hay on the floor. The guard slept on. In the tack room there was a work bench. It was too dark to see much, so with my back to the bench I felt for anything useful with my tied hands. My hand brushed several tools and then a small knife. I grabbed it and knocked against a harness, all leather and metal, which clattered to the ground. There was an oath and my guard appeared with pitchfork in hand. I tripped and slid my knife into the top of my boot.

“Get up, you sod.”

I was prodded with the pitchfork and made to go back to my stall. Before I had a chance to react, a leather rein was looped between my wrists, pulled tight and buckled around the rope lashing my wrists and the other end tied to a post above my head. The rein was tied too short for me to sit.

“You should have stayed quiet.”

Satisfied he had trussed me up without chance of escape, the man returned to his stall and was soon back to his snoring. I couldn't reach the buckle or the knife which had slipped down the inside of my boot. So I leaned against the stall partition and waited. Sometime after dawn, a man came into the stable and woke the guard. The guard struggled to his feet.

“Hook, 'bout time you were here. Our friend here tried to escape. I caught him and he's been a good boy since then.”

Hook came into the stall. A mean looking bastard, with a hooked nose and a prominent chin. Bearded, with long, greasy, lank hair. He wore a leather jerkin and had a sword in its scabbard strapped to his

waist. He looked me over, curious.

“Who the fuck are you, then?”

I said nothing.

“You were asking about Sly. Why?”

I stared at him. He came up to me and grabbed my chin in his left hand and glared at me.

“You, my friend are in deep shit. I don’t know who you are. You are a threat and the safest thing for me to do is kill you and dispose of your body. No one will find it, no one to blame. Now, who the hell are you?”

I jerked my head out of his grasp. He backed off.

“Mr. Hook, why do you think I am after this Sly person?”

“You were overheard at the Pig and Whistle.”

“No, Lind was overheard shouting the name Sly.”

“So?”

“I was talking to Lind about my sister, who has gone missing. It is possible from what I could understand from Lind that your Sly might have taken my sister on board the *Concord*. On the other hand, it might not have been my sister at all.”

Hook looked at me, unbelieving. I stared back—not a good idea. I needed to show some fear, a simple man looking for his sister. I dropped my eyes and repeated the story I had told Lind. I added a distraught mother that Judy had left behind. All I wanted was to be freed to continue the search and bring my sister back to her grieving family. He asked,

“What do you know of Sly?”

“Nothing. In my search, it was a name given to me. I have no idea who he is. I was confused at Lind’s reaction. It made me fear for my Judy.”

“Well, if it is Sly you are after, he’s gone. You won’t find him. If it is your sister he went with, then she is gone too. So go home and tell your grieving mother to forget her.”

With that he turned and left, taking my guard with him.

“Hey! What about me? I’m still tied up.”

My protestations were ignored and I was left to sort my problem out for myself. The hay bale was too far away. The upper stall door was wide open. If I could somehow lift myself on the lower door I could reach down for my knife. But it had swung back and was nearly closed. Turning round with my back to the door I reached back with one foot. Couldn't get my toe round the edge to pull it open. I kicked the door. It slammed shut and then bounced back to where it had been, hay on the floor impeding it. I scraped at the hay with my foot and tried again. Too hard and I lost my balance, the rein jerking my arms up behind my back and wrenching my shoulders. I was left hanging, painful until I could regain my footing. About thirty minutes later I was now angry, in pain and no nearer release when a small boy appeared.

“What you doing?”

I looked down at him. He waited for my response with a puzzled frown.

“It's a difficult game I am playing. Do you want to know how to play?”

The boy slowly walked around me.

“How did you do that?”

“What?”

“How did you get the rein like that?”

“Ah! That's a secret.”

“Go on, show me.”

“No, I want to release myself without help from you.”

The boy thought about it for a while.

“You're lying. You have been tied up and you can't get free.”

I laughed and offered him a reward if he could release me. We bargained and reached a fair price—thruppence. I told him where my knife was and he fished around in my boot and freed me. The money I had had on me taken, my new friend and I walked to the Cherub and I gave him his reward. I was quickly on the road to Plymouth with Maddie.

I had much to ponder, now certain that James was on his way



to Bermuda. What did Seth expect to do when he got there? He wouldn't be able to disguise the fact that James was not his son for long. Given the chance and a friendly adult, James would spill the beans. For that matter, James would be thrown together with the other two families travelling on the *Concord*, quite apart from the many settlers who had boarded in London. Plenty of opportunities for questions to be asked. What was the real reason that Seth had to go to such lengths to obtain passage on the *Concord*? Why was Hook so concerned that I might have been looking for Seth? Why was he protecting him? Who was Dorothy? How was I to get to Bermuda and when? The *Concord* had left Dartmouth about seven days ago. It would take them about five weeks. If the *Mary Evans* was the next boat scheduled to sail for Bermuda, it wouldn't be leaving Bristol for at least another four weeks, possibly longer. How about *Swallow*? I would need to talk to Richard Bushrode and Henri Giradeau, my partners. I wanted to find out more about the Somers Isles Company. Seth was up to no good. I might have a better idea what, once I knew more about Bermuda.

Back at Whimble St., Annie had put Abigail down for her afternoon sleep and was having a rest in bed herself. I lay down beside her, cuddled up to her back, and put my arms around her. She turned and we just lay there, her head on my shoulder, in deep distress. She looked worn and had lost weight. This was not good. She had to look after the unborn child and focus on keeping Abigail bright and happy.

"Annie, my love. You must let me take the burden of James' disappearance from off your shoulders. You have done all you can. Now, it is up to me to find him. I am certain James is on his way to Bermuda. I must follow him there."

Annie sighed, buried her head, and clung to me.

"Annie, you are not looking after yourself. You need to be strong and healthy for Abigail and the new one. Trust me. Let me do what I have to do in the knowledge that I will come back with James."

For a while nothing more was said. Then Annie kissed me and

got up. Looking down at me, she said, “Isaac, my dear husband. I do you trust you, totally. James, I will keep in a secret corner of my heart until you bring him back. You are right, I must focus on the present.”

She put her hands on her belly, swelling with the life inside. She smiled a sweet and loving smile.

“Isaac, do whatever you have to do. You can trust me to keep the rest of us safe.”

It was late afternoon before I left the house and walked down to the Fort’s offices. I asked for Captain Turner. He came down and shook my hand. He was aware that James was missing and he offered his condolences. He said that Sir Ferdinando was in Somerset but John Gorges was available, should I wish to see him. John was sympathetic. He listened intently as I gave him a summary of the investigations we had completed in our search. I told him that, as anxious as I was to find my son, I needed to know as much as possible about Bermuda and the company that ran it. I was sure that Seth had some ulterior mission which probably did not bode well for someone in Bermuda. If I was to rescue James, I needed to know more about what I could expect to find there. John sat back and steepled his hands together with fingers to his lips. He thought for a moment.

“Isaac, I know a certain amount. The Somers Isles Company is an offshoot of the Virginia Company. It has become an independent organization with its own charter and sends a governor to maintain law and order, as well as represent the commercial interests of the investors. There has been a constant battle between the governor and the settlers, as they want the freedom to live their lives and make the land profitable for their own benefit. The current Governor, Captain Henry Woodhouse, was appointed in October 1623. The living conditions in Bermuda are said to swing between some kind of paradise and a hell hole where people live in wretched, slave-like conditions. With that variety there are, obviously, people who have become successful and others that barely survive and nurse deep grudges.”

I asked how that was possible.

“The original settlers were enticed to Bermuda in much the same way as they were to Virginia. The promise of freedom, land and opportunity. However, added to those were descriptions of an idyllic setting, in azure seas, warm and balmy with unlimited amount of food grown from what appears to be extremely fertile soil, as well as the wild pigs that once infested the island, and fish of course. The investors need settlers and to make up numbers they cast a wide net. Many of them are from the slums of London, convicts and itinerants. This mix of people in close proximity has led to much conflict. Punishments are harsh. Much ill-will has resulted between the different social classes. I understand there is significant rivalry among the investors. Sir Edwin Sandys is the president of the company in London and has his supporters but there is a faction led by the Earl of Warwick that is at odds with Sir Edwin, caused in part by a rumor that Warwick might be involved with privateering out of Bermuda. Woodhouse has been given instructions to eradicate any vestige of piracy or privateering from Bermuda waters.”

I remarked that it sounded like complicated situation for me to insert myself. John nodded.

“Isaac, if you are looking for some skullduggery that your Seth might have latched himself on to, I’m sure there is much to be found. However, you will need some help. I know Captain Woodhouse, a soldier. A tough bastard but honest. I will write an introduction for you.”

We talked more. I asked many questions, but there wasn’t a lot more that John could provide me. David Tremaine was staying at the Minerva. Over a meal we discussed all we had learned. Through contacts he had, which he didn’t describe, he had been able to track Seth’s movements. It seemed that he consorted with people who were known to be allied to the pirate and privateering communities. His interest in Bermuda appeared to have something to do with a strong rumor going round that Bermuda would make a satisfactory base of operations for pirates or, more likely, privateers operating on the western side of the Atlantic, covering the trade routes of the Spanish.

If that was the case, then it was quite possible that Seth had been sent to Bermuda in disguise, presumably to meet with fellow travelers or perhaps people who could be persuaded. Going as a settler with family seemed as good a disguise as any. It would explain Mr. Hook's behavior. We agreed that I had to find a way to get to Bermuda as soon as possible. David was enthusiastic about using *Swallow*. He was adamant that he would be a crewman—whatever his role! I was startled as I was still unsure if *Swallow* would be large enough to make a trans-Atlantic voyage. David insisted that there were many vessels smaller that made regular deep water passages.

The following day I was able to have my meeting with Henri and Richard. They agreed that James needed to be rescued. As to alternative means available to travel to Bermuda, with time being critical, they accepted that *Swallow* was a likely option. They asked whether the crew were competent to make the voyage and was *Swallow* sufficiently seaworthy. They were interested in the commercial opportunity, aware through their merchant contacts that Bermuda was always in need of agricultural tools and fishing equipment. These were readily available in Plymouth. I told them that I was prepared to indemnify them of any risk to *Swallow*. Henri wouldn't hear it. Richard considered it but when he heard of Henri's response he agreed. As to the competence of the crew and the seaworthiness of *Swallow*, I would be meeting Ned Sampson that afternoon to make sure *Swallow* was ready as soon as possible. They admitted that as I was the senior partner and majority owner I was in a position to do whatever I wanted. However, they thanked me for asking for their advice and both agreed to support me wholeheartedly in my venture.

Richard stayed behind after Henri had left. He said he wanted to make sure I had committed to taking *Swallow* to Bermuda before broaching a further subject. A further 30 settlers had been sent to Cape Ann, something P. had mentioned when I was last in Dorchester. He was worried about the small settlement there, as were the investors, including Richard. Would it be possible to extend *Swallow's* journey after James was rescued from Bermuda to travel on to Cape

Ann? Supplies were always needed and they were anxious for a report on the state of the settlement and the impact of the new arrivals.

“Richard. So much depends on what I find in Bermuda and how long I have to stay there. If it is feasible I will load supplies in Bermuda and take them to Cape Ann.”

Richard accepted my point and said he would trust me to do what I thought right. I went down to Sutton Pool where *Swallow* lay at anchor. Ned was enthusiastic. However, he warned me that *Swallow* had been a pirate ship and would be prized highly should we meet up with any. We would need suitable armament but our main defense would be our maneuverability and boat speed. The armaments would be handy should we come across a similar pirate sloop. I told Ned that David would be joining us and I suggested he find a suitable position for him. Second mate, he said without hesitation. He would bring in more crew as we would be at sea for several weeks longer than normal. We would need someone experienced to manage the guns and train the crew. I told him I would send David to him to discuss and resolve all such concerns. My final meeting that day was with Mr. Scroud, who was not amused.

“Mr. Stanfield, I am sympathetic to you about the disappearance of your son. However, if you forgive me and with all due respect, I consider it foolhardy to go charging off into the blue like some knight errant on *Swallow*. I need hardly remind you she was built for coastal trading. Surely there is a better way—perhaps the *Sweet Rose* would be a better choice. Better still, take passage on a vessel already destined for Bermuda.”

I waited for Mr. Scroud to run out of steam.

“Another thing, Mr. Stanfield,” he went on without seeming to draw breath, “I hear terrible things about Bermuda. It is called the ‘Isle of Devils’ for good reason.”

“Stop, Mr. Scroud, for pity’s sake. Bermuda is a lively and successful settlement with over a thousand inhabitants. No devils, only significant opportunities to do business. *Swallow* is well built and perfectly capable of sailing across the Atlantic. I came to advise you

to provide the funds that Captain Sampson will need to provision *Swallow* for an extended sea voyage. He thinks it will take a few days to make the necessary arrangements but I can't see him being ready for at least a week."

With ill-grace, Mr. Scroud agreed to do as asked and I left him. Despite my outward appearance of confidence, I was worried about using *Swallow*. However, it was the quickest way I could get to Bermuda. While the concern for James was gnawing away at my gut, I was able to alleviate it by action. I was worried about Annie. The stress she was under had to be bad for her pregnancy and the sooner I was away the sooner I hoped I could resolve this whole horrible mess.

Later that evening David and I met at the Minerva. Ned and he had met with the ordnance officer at the naval dockyard. *Swallow* would be moved to the dockyard in the morning to have cannon and munitions loaded. Meantime, supplies were in the process of being ordered and would be delivered to the Pool to be loaded onto *Swallow* in four days. David had suggested the normal store of spare spars, canvas and cordage that *Swallow* carried should be significantly increased. Once this was taken care of we would be ready to sail. David had introduced Ned to a gunner friend of his who was old, bent, deaf but experienced. He was bored and leapt at the chance to go back to sea. I didn't remember his name but everyone called him 'Guns'. Five extra crew had been found, all known and approved by either Ned or David, including a carpenter and a steward who doubled as a cook. I didn't ask how as I thought the Navy swept up all available manpower. Obviously, there was a way to avoid the press gang.

David was keen but concerned. We were sailing late in the year and storms were likely. We had already experienced a storm in *Swallow* a week or so ago and we had not come out of that unscathed. With heavy armament on deck, we would be top heavy and more unstable. I pointed out that in that storm, we had sailed unladen and as a consequence insufficiently ballasted. We would be carrying significant freight and be well ballasted on our voyage to Bermuda.

And what the hell were we to expect when we did get to Bermuda? A base for privateers or, worse—piracy, with which Seth or Sly appeared to be involved. That meant James would be at high risk when we tried to extract him. Then there was major unrest between the settlers with resources and those barely able to survive; unhappiness between the settlers in Bermuda and the Company back in London, more particularly with the Governor and the settlers; possible religious unrest with the Puritans sending families into a staunchly Anglican community. We would have to keep our wits about us.

Next day, David supervised the loading of the cannon into *Swallow*. He needed to satisfy himself about the stability of the boat. I left him to decide whether or not to load all six falconets. I, meantime, talked further with John Gorges to get a better sense of what I might expect in Bermuda. He gave me his letter of introduction to Captain Woodhouse, the Governor. We covered the same ground and I didn't learn much more. However, he did let me read a copy of some documents that had been transcribed from a memoir written by Captain Nathaniel Butler who had been Governor between 1619 and 1622. It included a detailed map of Bermuda that had been drawn by a surveyor called Richard Norwood, even showing the plots of land that had been allocated to the settlers within the eight areas, called tribes, acquired by the major investors. I copied it. I was told that Bermuda was surrounded by reefs which were located some distance from shore to the North and West. The only approach was from the East and should be made in daylight with great care.





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*Part 2*

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## — CHAPTER 25 —

### **Journal entry**—*November 1624*

I had a long sleepless night with Annie in my arms prior to departure. We talked awhile till she fell asleep her sweet breath on my chest. My mind became a maelstrom of increasingly desperate thoughts about the horrors that James was suffering and the difficulties we were facing in our attempt to rescue him.

Boarding *Swallow* in the early morning hours, I met with Ned, J.B., and David to run through a final checklist. Everything was in order with full crew and supplies aboard. Ned had received additional pilot information about the approaches to Bermuda. The main concern was the possibility of severe storms in the mid-Atlantic. It was that time of year, based on experience of transatlantic sailors. I was worried about the weight of armaments. David had decided on just four falconets. They would only be of use against small vessels, presumably pirate, so were secured amidships. Their weight evenly balanced along the length of the main deck, as out of the way as possible.

We sailed from Plymouth 28 October on the morning ebb tide, a clear day, sparkle on the water, *Swallow* eager and willing. My anxiety at the delays before we could set off to rescue James now somewhat alleviated, I could focus on *Swallow* and the extraordinary experience of fast, ocean sailing on a remarkable boat. We headed

southwest on a track towards the Azores. Mains'l, jib, stays'l, and jib tops'l set and filled. We were fortunate, the prevailing south-west-erlies had shifted to the south and then southeast. *Swallow* loved it, wind on her larboard beam. The first two days we made nearly 400 miles and the weather grew progressively warmer as we moved south. At this rate we would be close by the Azores in another four days and changing course to head west towards Bermuda, a further 1800 miles away.

The crew settled well. Obi becoming increasingly confident in his competence as the newly promoted bosun. His difficulty on *Swallow*'s proving run he had put behind him. He was popular with the crew, as popular as any bosun can be. He applied discipline fairly and was increasingly respected by both crew and officers. David Tremaine, whose long experience as a Navy bosun was much appreciated, kept a friendly eye on him. I was able to spend time off watch with Obi. It had been many years since we had the opportunity to renew our previous close friendship. It was, of course, different now. We were no longer apprentice seamen. I was no longer Isaac, but Mr. Stanfield. He had grown up and out, bearded and balding with the remaining shock of red hair now tied into a tail behind his head. The freckles of his youth had largely disappeared behind a weathered, brown visage. His voice had deepened with cadences of the Irish making an occasional appearance. I asked him about that. When I had first met Obi, he looked but didn't sound Irish. He laughed. He had the Irish in him. His maternal grandfather came from Kinsale. We talked about his life as a sailor. He had a girl in Weymouth. Actually, it seemed he had a girl in several ports. He asked me about my adventures away from *Rosie*. Enjoyable evenings spent leaning over the rail watching the rush of water streaming past as we talked.

I also had time to get reacquainted with J.B. He and Obi had become close through the years they shared as crew on *Rosie*. He had taken on the role of mentor to Obi after I had gone. Tall, laconic, and calm. J.B.'s brown hair was now grey, including his bushy eyebrows over eyes deep set and brown, clean shaven, a heavily lined ruddy

face with a simple ring in each earlobe. He had been a crewmember of *Rosie* for twenty years. He said it still felt strange to be away from Captain Brown, having started as ship's boy and working his way up to bosun. He was in awe of David, having witnessed some of his earlier escapades as an agent for Sir F., and recognized him as an experienced seaman and a natural leader. While J.B. was Ned's second in command, he deferred to David which made things a little difficult for Ned. David was tactful but there was an imbalance which Ned as Skipper needed to sort out.

Younger by several years than J.B., Ned was a naturally cheerful soul. Slight of build, dark brown hair kept short, large grey eyes in a narrow face. He depended on J.B. for maintenance of the necessary discipline on board. While an excellent sailor and a competent captain on a small, coastal vessel, he was inclined to lead by example. Rather than delegate, Ned would leap into action. J.B. and David tried to steady him down but it was difficult. Crew loved him but he made life easy for them. Under more trying circumstances, heavy weather or engagement with the enemy, I worried about his ability to lead. The weather remained kind for the next several days, from the southeast, a strong breeze with bright and increasingly warm sun.

On 5 November, mid-morning, the island of Terceira was sighted. The wind had shifted and was now from the south and we hauled in our sails. Winds now off our larboard bow feeling much stronger. *Swallow* heeling, with gunnels awash, was being pushed down. The helm counteracting the boat's tendency to head up was also acting as a break. We needed to reduce sail and bring her more on to an even keel. A reef was taken in our main, stays'l and jib tops'l doused. *Swallow* immediately regained her poise and speed. Our track was to keep the island to starboard and continue southwest to pass the island of San Miguel to port. As we approached the Azores we passed many vessels of various sizes and type. Any that looked suspicious we stayed well away from. Speed was our primary asset and we made full use of it. Our rig was an odd one, associated with pirates, so suspicions were probably mutual.

Guns was anxious to do gunnery practice so Ned made time and a level deck by easing off the wind and reducing sail. The guns were unlashd and run out. Although they were only falconets they looked and sounded big enough on *Swallow*. We didn't fool ourselves. But the crew were willing and eager, those with experience helping to pass on skills to their mates.

South of San Miguel at latitude 37 we turned west southwest to drop down to Bermuda's latitude 32½ degrees and thence due west. Wind remained from the south. All sails were reset and eased, we began our final leg on a reach, foaming through dark blue seas with wisps of high clouds above us. We expected landfall in nine days or less. All remained well for the following three days. Dawn on 9 November, the sun rose behind us as an angry red line on the horizon then disappeared behind cloud. Wind dropped, our boat speed significantly reduced. There was a sullen swell which *Swallow* didn't like, nor did we. The boat's movement had become more erratic. David was concerned.

"There is heavy weather to the south. We are seeing its outriders in the motion of the water and the wind. We are in for a serious blow."

Ned took note but we continued under full sail. There was a wind shift, now on our larboard quarter. Wind speed increased and we were scudding downwind—exciting but ominous. Through the day and into the night, we continued our race across the Atlantic. Six bells in the middle watch (3:00 in the morning), all hands were called. The noise was deafening. The roar of the wind and the whistling as it passed through the rigging, the boat creaking in complaint, the drumming of the lines and cracking of the sails. *Swallow* was greatly over-powered and high following seas were causing her to pitch forward burying the bow into the back of the preceding roller then back as the roller passed underneath her. Steering was a serious issue. We were travelling too fast, a danger the bow would be driven too deep into the water to recover, and water was increasing in the hold with the pumps active. Ned had left it late.

As the off-watch crew tumbled up on deck, Ned shouted to douse the stays'l and jib tops'l. Too late—the tops'l burst and reduced to streaming rags. The stays'l halyard parted and the stays'l became a flapping, cracking, flying monster in the dark, held by its starboard sheet, which then snagged around the bowsprit. Without a thought, Ned leapt along the deck to the head and onto the bowsprit to release the stays'l jib sheet. Before anyone could get to help him, he had freed the sheet. The sail, now entirely untethered, blew away like a kite, the trailing sheet wrapped around Ned's ankle and pulled him overboard then releasing itself disappeared into the night. *Swallow* sailed over Ned. He resurfaced as the boat raced past him, close to the hull and was grabbed by two of the crew and pulled aboard. Unconscious, he was taken below, carried by J.B. and another crewman. I shouted at David to take command and followed J.B. to the main cabin. The jib was lowered and three full reefs tied in, likewise the main. Boat speed eased and *Swallow* kept her head above water. David had regained control. Ned was in a bad way with a serious head wound. A linen sheet was torn up and a pad pressed against the wound. Blood seeped through but slowed. He had a badly broken arm and his ankle, where the rope had grabbed him, was an ungodly mess. Bradley, his steward, took over. Ned was put on his bed, his arm straightened and splinted. We didn't know what to do with his ankle so left Bradley to cope as best he could.

Returning to the fury and deafening noise on deck, J.B. was comfortable for David to take over as Skipper. The remains of the jib tops'l had been lowered and removed. Pumps continued to be manned. However, the seas were frightening, towering up behind *Swallow* and surging underneath her with a howling, terrifying roar. We would be in dire straits if such a wave broke over our stern. The winds continued to build. Our speed was still too great. The jib and main were doused, storm trys'l raised. We were in hurricane conditions. David shouted at me

“It's no use, we need to heave to and ride this out.”

So saying, he ordered a sea anchor to be prepared for deployment

on the fore deck. It was a heavy triangular sail tied to a cringle at each corner and the lines brought back and spliced to a heavier pennant line led through the larboard hawse anchor pipe round the capstan and then the bitter end belayed. On David's order and as a roller surged under us *Swallow* went about and headed up into the hurricane, the anchor was deployed and took up the strain as the boat fell away. The storm trys'l was belayed hard over to larboard and the helm positioned to balance the boat and then lashed. *Swallow* became a relatively stable cork, rising and falling as the now oncoming waves roared past and under us. The strain on the sea anchor was enormous and I expressed my concern to David.

"Don't worry, it is not there to stop us, it's there to keep our head to wind and slow our backward drift. In fact, we are being kept just off the wind by the anchor pennant positioned off our larboard bow which steadies the motion and allows the boat to track through the water."

The storm was fast moving, abating after 24 hours. It was a most uncomfortable 24 hours, but we were safe. Everything moveable had been double lashed down on deck but the water and wind onslaught snapped our bowsprit which called for immediate and urgent action. Without the forward tension provided by the forestay the mast was not sufficiently supported. The jib halyard was lashed to the end of the remaining section, hauled up hard to act as an emergency forestay. The broken end of the bowsprit, with stays still attached, was brought aboard and secured. It would be dealt with when conditions calmed. Ned remained unconscious. Bradley was in constant attendance but could do little. He was worried that there had been serious internal damage. He had discovered a couple of broken ribs and severe bruising elsewhere.

With the passing of the storm and the calming of the seas we took stock. In addition to the bowsprit, we had lost railings; the longboat, secured upside down on the main deck, was smashed; and the lower fittings on the larboard shrouds had frayed. Our four cannon had been well secured and hadn't shifted. Chips, the carpenter, with



crew assistance set to work. The bowsprit was replaced. David's advice for us to ship extra spares had been prescient. Shrouds were repaired, after which David had the main raised and the sea anchor brought aboard and squared away. The jib was raised and the new bowsprit tested, Chips justifiably adamant that it was as good as new.

A log had been kept of our drift during the storm. We knew the rate of drift and the direction. During the storm the wind had shifted south so we had been pushed north. A sun sight, taken as soon as it appeared, had us at latitude 35. By our dead reckoning Bermuda was still some 1300 miles away. The wind had shifted to the west after the storm passed us. We headed southwest, close hauled under jib and main.

Sunday, 14 November, Ned worsened. He had not regained consciousness since the accident. Bradley reported that Ned's breath was becoming very labored and thought the end was close. I went down to him. Bandaged and bundled to limit his movement, a deeply unhappy sight. I sat with him and held his hand, unresponsive. Later that day, he died and was slipped overboard, sewn into a weighted canvas shroud. I read the service from the Book of Common Prayer before a saddened crew. A popular Skipper and a fine young man. I would miss him.

Bermuda sighted morning of the 23rd due west. We had shortened sail to make sure we approached in daylight. Wind light and now from the south. Lookouts posted on the bow and up the mast. The sea calm and the most extraordinary blue, showing green where coral reefs reached towards the surface. Bermuda was a thin line on the horizon. As we sailed closer, the colors in the water changed, light blue, azure, green depending on the seabed. I thought of my son, somewhere on the island. I would find him. I prayed he was unharmed, a knot of suppressed excitement in my stomach. To ease my anxiety I had Annie's calming image in my mind. I reminded myself of my promise to her, I would return to her and Abigail with James.

A channel had been marked. It seemed we had a choice close to land. Through my telescope, I could see that there was a narrow

passage between two rocky promontories, each guarded by a substantial fort. There was a marked passage that took us round the southern promontory, which was an island, to a wider passage into St. George's harbor. I had my copy of Richard Norwood's map which David studied. We raised our English flag to the masthead. We didn't want to be mistaken for the enemy. The guns poking out of the forts looked impressive. At that moment, one was fired as a signal to us. We dipped our flag in acknowledgement. A signal flag was hoisted at the fort advising us to await a pilot boat. David had decided on the southern entrance to the harbor, but as ordered, we furled the main and under jib we tacked back and forth until a pilot boat sailed out to meet us. Coming alongside, we welcomed the pilot and two armed soldiers aboard. They didn't seem pleased to see us, demanding to know who we were. We showed the pilot the ship's papers, detailing home port, ownership, and purpose. We provided the manifest of our cargo. After careful examination, the pilot apologized for the unfriendly welcome. The rig of our boat matched that of known pirate vessels. He told us that Bermuda had had problems with pirates, who were forbidden entry. He proceeded to direct us through the southern entrance, tight as we approached with rocky ledges visible on either side, past another island and into the harbor where we were guided to a mooring field. We were told to drop anchor and await arrival of civil authority.

*Swallow* was made shipshape and while awaiting for the official visit, the crew were set to holystoning the decks. A gentleman eventually arrived, rowed over from the town dock. Our ship's papers were re-examined. We were required to complete forms of entry and asked our intentions. David and I had discussed how we would explain our purpose in visiting Bermuda. John Gorges had told me we could trust Governor Woodhouse. We would be in a difficult position if our intentions were uncovered after the fact. We would need to tread carefully. Without knowing the lay of the land and who else we could trust we agreed not to mention our pursuit of Sly and James to anyone but the Governor. We concocted the story that we were

heading for New England but were blown off course by a hurricane. We had lost our skipper and needed provisions. A copy of the relevant portion of the ship's log pertaining to that sad loss was included with the entry forms, together with written confirmation of Ned's burial at sea. We needed to have *Swallow* inspected at a boatyard for any damage we might have sustained. We hoped that would give us time to explore and find James. The hold was inspected. Our story was accepted. Evidence of the repairs we had already undertaken were visible. Our longboat still in pieces, waiting till we were on dry land before it could be rebuilt. Given clearance, we were permitted to move *Swallow* to the dockside where we moored behind another larger vessel, the *Concord*. While David and his crew were working the boat alongside, I looked about me. The first impression was sublime. The light wind, carrying a sweet scent from the wooded shoreline, the harbor busy with boats, the temperature mild, a gentle soft morning. After our difficult voyage it was manna for the soul.

David, as Skipper, and me, as Owner, were requested to attend the Governor at the State House. It was easy to spot, close to the harbor, standing out from the surrounding buildings. Made of stone and painted white, two stories high with a balustrade around a flat roof with two chimneys. The other houses and a church, close by on a hill, most appeared to be made from wood frames covered in palm fronds. Before disembarking we told J.B. to say nothing about our intentions, with the charge to keep the crew aboard until our return. On our way to the State House David and I walked across a square, which seemed to be a gathering place for the town's citizens. There was a pub on one side, on the other a pillory and stocks. An unfortunate had his legs clamped in the stocks. He was ignored by his fellow citizens, which suggested he had been there awhile. Was this a typical sight, perhaps?

Mounting the steps to the imposing front door, we were met by a black servant who showed us to a small room off the main hall. We were startled. A slave? The hall was a large assembly area with benches and desks arrayed before a raised chair, presumably the

Governor's seat. There was a scent that came from the wood furniture, Bermuda cedar. After a long wait Governor Woodhouse entered and greeted us, a thin man with the erect bearing of an old soldier, bearded, dark brown hair streaked with grey, eyes under a heavy brow, brown and direct. We introduced ourselves and I handed him John Gorge's letter. He bade us sit. He was anxious to hear news of England. We did our best to satisfy him. He asked whether the letter he held in his hand was the only communication we had for him. He was used to a sack full of correspondence from landowners and the Somers Isles Company full of complaints and demands, so it was a pleasure to receive only the one. So saying he opened and read the letter. After which, he settled back in his chair.

"Gentlemen, I apologize for having kept you waiting. I needed to read the report from the harbor master of your arrival and intentions. I have now read Mr. Gorges' letter which implies a different set of intentions. He says you are on a difficult mission and requests my help on your behalf which sounds intriguing. John Gorges and I were acquainted many years ago. We enjoyed each other's company. He advises me that he told you that you could speak freely with me."

I thought for a moment, putting my words into order.

"Well, sir. Most of what was told to your officials is correct. The only discrepancy was naming our intended destination as New England. We do plan to make for New England when we leave here. However, our intention was always to come here. Simply put, my son has been kidnapped and, we believe, brought to Bermuda."

The Governor raised his eyebrows and waited for me to explain.

"We were able to trace the man responsible. He boarded the *Concord* in Dartmouth, ostensibly with wife and son, under an assumed name. Not only is the son not his, I doubt the woman is his wife."

The Governor nodded and waited for more.

"We believe that the man is involved with some kind of conspiracy. Forgive me sir, but I understand that there is a degree of enmity between various groups in Bermuda. We don't know which faction he might be associated with but it is our belief that he used

the assisted passage scheme for indentured families to come to Bermuda under cover.”

“Mr. Stanfield, you are right. There are, as you said, factions in Bermuda. I won’t go into the details here, but it is my job to maintain law and order, as well as manage the interests of my employer, the Somers Isles Company, to ensure the commercial viability of the island. The presence of a troublemaker can only exacerbate what is a difficult situation here. We need to find the miscreant before he can do damage.”

David leant forward. “Excuse me, sir. There are some worrying issues here. Would you allow me a moment to raise them with you?”

The Governor nodded.

“A key concern is the safe return of Mr. Stanfield’s son. If, as we believe, there is a personal grievance behind his kidnapping, we must be careful not to risk vindictive harm to him. I think we should consider him to be a hostage.”

The Governor did not react. We needed to engage him. I continued with the list of issues.

“Sir, we need to find out why the man came to Bermuda. We have been informed of some of the challenges you face. Rather than requesting information that you might be reluctant to reveal, let me tell you what we have been told. You can then decide to what extent you might wish to confide in us. We know that the Earl of Warwick is a major shareholder and is at odds with Sir Edwin Sandys. If the man represents the Earl’s interests, we would need to tread carefully. Robert Rich, we know was Warwick’s cousin and represented his interests here. After his death, Warwick’s representatives here now report back to his brother, Sir Nathaniel Rich and, so, to Warwick. However unlikely, we need to find out if Sir Nathaniel is involved with this man without causing upset. My friend here, Mr. Tremaine, has spent a considerable part of his career in combating the piracy scourge in Europe. He has been Sir Ferdinando Gorges’ agent in many hair-raising exploits to enable Sir Ferdinando to reach a better understanding of the actions and movements of the

pirates that threaten his interests. Mr. Tremaine has identified links between our man and people close to the pirate conspiracy. A possibility exists that they believe their extensive use of the Scilly Isles, as a base to control the western approaches to Europe, might be a model for something similar with Bermuda as a base to control or intercept shipping out of America. With King James ordering a cessation of privateering against the Spanish, piracy, or illicit privateering, is an obvious alternative. I gather you have already experienced problems with them.”

The Governor smiled grimly but seemed increasingly uncomfortable. His earlier friendliness was gone. Nevertheless I pressed on.

“Our investigation uncovered a scheme to settle Puritan families in Anglican Bermuda. Might this be another bone of contention?”

The Governor studied me for a long while. I could almost see his mind working.

“Mr. Stanfield. You have been remarkably well informed, too well informed in my opinion. Perhaps not entirely remarkable. John Gorges in his letter says you were an important member of Sir Ferdinando’s staff. I see that, against my will, I must work with you. I am most dissatisfied that, if you pardon my bluntness, two strangers arrive with privileged information and throw additional problems at me, problems I do not have the capacity to deal with. Mr. Gorges’ letter requires me to help. However, it must be in absolute secrecy. As you work to uncover whatever plot is being hatched, you must keep my involvement entirely hidden. I am in a delicate position here, trying to maintain the balance between the various factions, while dealing with a constant flow of complaints, demands, and counter demands from the Company back in England. At the same time, as I have said already, I must maintain law and order. No matter how just I might be, I can never satisfy everyone. Thank God, there is now a House of Assembly that helps the governing process. I have a trusted servant who is entirely discrete. My confidence in him and his association with me are not known generally. I will arrange for him to act as my liaison with you. Such advice or warning I might wish to

provide you will come through him. You will receive a note tonight delivered to your boat identifying a place and time when you can meet him. He will find a guide for you.”

I thanked Governor Woodhouse and told him we needed to find out what happened to the Dartmouth families that had arrived on the *Concord*. More particularly, the Cooper and Clark families each with their one son. The Governor explained that each settler family were indentured to a particular landowner or tenant. They would have been taken to the land-holding in the relevant tribe, Bermuda’s name for a parish. He would find out the particulars and send them to us with his note. We informed the Governor we had brought supplies of agricultural and fishing equipment to be sold for the benefit of the settlers. We suggested a barter for supplies of food we wanted to obtain in Bermuda to be taken to New England. The Governor would arrange for his quartermaster to attend *Swallow* the next day. David asked him for assistance in ship repairs. The Governor scribbled a note and handed it to David.

“Take this to the harbor master. He will direct you to our best boatyard. They will look after you. Now good day to you.”

We stood shook his hand and left. He clearly wanted us and our problem out of his hair. Back to *Swallow*. In the hour we had been away, a crowd of St. George’s residents had gathered. Visitors from home were a magnet to the settlers. J.B., at the harbor master’s request, had moved *Swallow* from the dock and anchored nearby. Close enough for questions to be called across the water about the state of England and answers shouted back. A boat, made available to us till ours was repaired, was sent from *Swallow*. I was rowed back while David went in search of the harbor master to arrange for *Swallow* to be taken to the boatyard.

J.B. informed me that the *Concord’s* skipper had come a calling. He would welcome a chance to meet me as soon as possible as they were planning to leave for Virginia in a few hours. We met in the Great Cabin of the *Concord* 30 minutes later. Captain Johns out of Bristol was an old friend of my friend Captain Morris. It appeared

that the exploits of my youth witnessed by Captain Morris had become something of a yarn, embellished with the telling. Captain Johns was delighted to meet the subject of that yarn. No matter how friendly he was, I did not want to divulge the reasons for my trip to Bermuda. Our conversation was light, sharing experiences. I needed to probe without seeming to. He was happy to discuss his passage to Bermuda, following much the same route as us. How did his passengers deal with the voyage? For the most part well as the weather was good—since they had arrived 12 November they had not been affected by the storm we had sailed through. I said that I had always found it difficult sailing with children aboard. He agreed. However, the parents kept them out of the way so he didn't see much of them. Perhaps he could have made them ship's boys, I said laughing. He laughed, too. It was a good idea but none were of the right age, either too young or already teens and trouble. Did he find much difference in the settlers coming from London and those from the West Country? Londoners were difficult and coarse. Being a Somerset man, he was not impressed with them. How did the settlers mix? For the most part surprisingly well, considering how different they all were. Did he pick up many on his way from London? A few in Weymouth. A few more in Dartmouth.

"Dartmouth? That's a pretty little port. But not the normal place to pick up settlers, surely. Wouldn't Plymouth have been a more likely place?"

"You're right, it is pretty and well sheltered. We were asked to pick up three families there."

"Must have been special."

"Not really. I hardly saw them on the voyage. One man, Cooper I think his name was, a bit difficult. Now tell me about *Swallow*. It has a most interesting rig."

There was little I could do to return the conversation to the settlers from Dartmouth. Captain Johns and I spent the remainder of the meeting, over several glasses of madeira, talking about the finer points of a fore-and-aft rig. We parted in friendly fashion. A short



time later the *Concord* departed for Virginia. I had learned little but an indication that perhaps Mr. Cooper was Sly.

Back on board *Swallow*, I found that David had talked to the harbor master. He was advised to take *Swallow* further up the harbor to an inlet where there was a yard run by a competent Dutch boat builder by the name of Jacobson. That afternoon, four crewmen under Obi's command rowed David and me to meet Mr. Jacobson. It gave us a chance to explore. Seemingly landlocked, the harbor appeared well protected but much of it was exposed to the South. There were remains of sunken boats scattered around the shoreline which bore evidence of that. At the boatyard, I told Obi to explore further and return in an hour. We were quickly enveloped in the activities of a busy yard. Many boat hulls on slips in various stages of completion or repair with men, black and white, working on them. Most had the hull shape of shallops but there was at least one that bore a smaller resemblance to *Swallow*. We tracked down Mr. Jacobson and introduced ourselves. He had a white, bushy beard stained with tobacco and twinkling brown eyes. A dead pipe was clenched between the few teeth he had left, revealed to be yellow when he smiled in greeting. We shook hands. His were callused with several fingertips missing and others with nails missing. A carpenter's hands.

"I saw you come in," he said in a thick and guttural accent. "I recognized the boat. Dutch with modifications. Last time I saw it, it was being used by pirates."

Seeing our interest, he took us to a quieter corner of the yard, motioned us to sit wherever and on whatever we could. We sat round him like schoolboys, all eager attention while he refilled and lit his pipe. With little prompting from us, he described how *Swallow* had been built in a Dutch yard about seven years ago. It had a different rig then, two masts, bastardized with lateen sails but still recognizable, designed for coastal trading. It had been captured off the coast of Ireland by pirates who had sailed it to the Caribbean. It had been recaptured and sailed back to Holland, where it had been permitted entry as its papers showed it to be a privateer operating under a

Dutch flag. Generous reparations were made to the original Dutch owner, who was delighted to receive full recompense for his loss. Mr. Jacobson had been working at the yard to which it was brought.

The new owner wanted modifications to be made to the rig and hull to improve speed and maneuverability. What he wanted was much in advance of the thinking of even the most creative of Dutch boat builders. Designs were made, models built and tested. The prevailing wisdom was that a fore-and-aft rig was not robust enough for heavy weather sailing. However, strengthening the masts, with additional shrouds, back stay and fore stay made it robust enough. Rather than a lateen sail, the boat was rigged with one taller mast with a four-sided mainsail with gaff and boom. The addition of a long bowsprit with a foresail (the jib) hanked onto the forestay, now attached to the end of the bowsprit, increased sail area. The slot between the jib and main increased wind speed and pressure over the back of the main, increasing lift.

Mr. Jacobson told us the last he saw of *Swallow* was shortly before he came to Bermuda. He had been the carpenter on a Dutch boat heading for North America when it was shipwrecked off Bermuda about five years ago. He was persuaded to stay in Bermuda to help expand the fledging boatbuilding industry by the previous Governor, Captain Butler. David explained about the rough passage we had had and said we wanted the boat examined thoroughly. Under heavy seas, we were shipping more water than he liked. Also, the rigging needed inspecting. The bowsprit was a spare and might need replacing. Mr. Jacobson was delighted to remake his acquaintance with *Swallow*. As we left, he said the *Swallow* redesign work he had been involved with in Holland had greatly influenced the design of boats of all sizes he was building in Bermuda. Obi and his crew were waiting for us and we were rowed back to *Swallow*.

David went to talk to J.B. and deal with crew issues while I found a corner and tried to take my mind off James being so close yet so far by updating my journal, something I had continued to do whenever convenient. As I wrote, I thought back over the years to 1613

when my life had changed so drastically and I had agreed with Will Whiteway to keep a journal. It had become an inseparable habit over the years. How much had happened. Will and I had lived such different lives. He was now a well-respected and important citizen of Dorchester while I had gone from adventure to adventure. I thought of Aby. Now a distant memory, four eventful years since she died. Annie, ever faithful, ever resourceful. How badly I had treated her. Then back to James. Where on this island was he? How was he being treated? Had he come to serious harm? How different would he be as a result of these horrible experiences? I longed to find him but we had to move carefully. So much was unknown. We could not afford to make a misstep.

It was dark when I aroused myself from my musings, the sun setting early and quickly. A short while later a boat came from the shore and a package was delivered for me. I met with David in his cabin, Ned's belongings having been cleared away by Bradley, who was now David's steward. We were served dinner with a bottle of wine to celebrate our safe passage to Bermuda, with a sad toast to Ned's memory and soul. After dinner we examined the contents of the package. The Governor's man, Jacob Hallet, would meet me on the road outside Mr. Jacobson's boatyard at 8:00pm the next night. He would approach me, already aware of my appearance. The package contained details on the Cooper and Clark families as I had requested. They had been taken to the Earl of Southampton's tribe and Lord Paget's tribe respectively. The Cooper family indentured to a tenant farmer by name of Jamieson who worked land belonging to Sir Ralph Winwood; the Clark family to a tenant farmer by name of Garth on land owned by Lord Paget. Mr. Hallet would arrange for a guide to take us wherever we wanted. We studied the Norwood map, showing the strips of land owned by the investors. As few if any of the investors had come to Bermuda, each strip or set of strips, if owned by the same investor, would be farmed by a tenant farmer, who employed indentured laborers. Dwellings were built to house the laborers and their families, but we needed to know more about

how the process worked and the general lay of the land before we met Hallet. We were uncomfortable relying entirely on the one mysterious representative of the Governor who wanted us done with as soon as possible.

*Swallow* was moved and docked at Mr. Jacobson's yard the next morning. He said he would survey the boat thoroughly and, unless there was some serious deficiency in the hull's planking, the boat would not need to be careened. That being the case, the crew could remain on board. However, he suggested they take advantage of the opportunity to spend time ashore and pitch camp on one of the islands close by. J.B. thought that an excellent idea, enthusiastically supported by Obi. David delegated all responsibilities to J.B. with respect to boat and crew so he and I could focus on our search. A skeleton crew to be on watch on board at all times. Our only concern, expressed to J.B. and Obi, was that we didn't want any crew to desert or otherwise go absent. They would need to devise ways to give the crew freedom to enjoy shore leave but remain loyal to *Swallow*. Chips, our carpenter, was delighted to make use of the services of the yard. He now had the means to complete the repair of *Swallow's* longboat, damaged in the storm. We went in search of Mr. Jacobson to question him about Bermuda and he referred us to his book-keeper, Gus, an old Scot, who had been on the island since 1612.

## — CHAPTER 26 —

Gus was a mine of information, having lived through the turbulent years of early settlement in Bermuda. He was taciturn, a typical Scot and had to be drawn out with the right questions. He admitted that the last twelve years had seen extraordinary change. We coaxed him to explain why. Once he got into his stride the information flowed.

Large numbers of settlers came in a first wave around 1612, Gus amongst them, and were largely confined to the eastern end around St. George's and St. David's Islands. As they moved out to claim the land the investors had bought, they had to hack their way through a veritable jungle. There were animal tracks which helped, caused by wild hogs. The early settlers depended on them for food to such an extent there are few left. Another early problem was the rats which had arrived on ships carrying settlers. For years attempts were made to eradicate them without success. Eventually, nature did what the settlers couldn't. The winter of 1617 was a brutal one, cold and tempestuous, and the rat population was decimated. While many settlers came, many left. What appeared a paradise quickly became something else. It was incredibly hard work to open up land for planting.

The system of government had not been carefully thought out. The authority of the Governor was seen to represent the absent land-owners and to oppress the labor force. The investors had land, they had tenant farmers who needed laborers. In desperation, the investors emptied prisons. The Governors themselves, sent over by the Somers Isles Company, were a mixed bunch. Some bad, others worse.

Nevertheless, matters slowly improved. Each contributed to the development of Bermuda in some way. The first, Richard Moore, appointed in 1612, who built the early forts, was a poor administrator. By the time Daniel Tucker was sent over in 1616, Bermuda was close to failure. Tucker was a monster with a vicious temper, hanging people for minor offences. But, as much through brutality and bullying as inspired leadership, he brought Bermuda back from the brink. He was the one that had the Somers Isles of Bermuda surveyed by Richard Norwood.

I interrupted Gus' narrative to show him a copy of Norwood's map. He was surprised having never seen it, not something readily available. He fell silent studying the map intently, occasionally nodding to himself.

"Gentlemen, I was talking about Governor Tucker. I don't think I mentioned the Overplus scandal."

"No, Gus, you didn't."

"Well, when Norwood completed his survey for Governor Tucker, he had worked out the total amount of land to be divided. He knew the total number of shares and how many shares each landowner had. He had calculated that each share should be allocated 26 acres. However, when it came to Sir Edward Sandys' tribe, to fit the number of shares to the land available would have meant some shares would have to be allocated less than 26 acres. Instead of that, he allotted 25 acres to each share. This resulted in an "overplus" of unallocated land of some 200 acres which Tucker took over for himself. He had a mansion built on the land and lives there still."

He showed us where the Tucker mansion was on the map.

"It wasn't only that he took land which wasn't his to take, he had Somers Isles Company people build the house, as well as clear and landscape his property."

I asked about these Company people.

"Bermuda is divided into two parts—Company land and private land. The eight tribes you see marked on the map comprise the private land. The land at the eastern end of the island belongs to the

Company. The Company finds it difficult to find people to work for it. So, for Tucker to take that scarce resource to use for his own purposes was a part of the scandal.”

“Didn’t the landowners complain?”

“Yes, but Tucker was so ferocious in response to any criticism that they backed down. He even had someone hanged for criticizing him shortly after arriving as Governor on the island. Not a nice man.”

With that, Gus changed the subject. He showed us, on the map, where the main road connected the islands. Two bridges had been built, one at either end of Coney Island, connecting St. George’s Island to the main island on the north shore. It continued along the shoreline north of Harrington Sound to an inlet and a tidal stream that flowed in and out of Harrington Sound at Flatts. Another bridge had been built over the stream. The road continued down the main island, with tribal paths leading off it to serve the communities that had spread throughout the area. An order had been made to have the road not cut through private land, where possible, so for the most part the road followed the shoreline. There was a narrow channel at the western end between the main island and Somerset Island, called Sandys Narrow. A fourth bridge had been built to cross that channel and the road continued to the west end of Somerset. Gus said although the road had been cleared through the jungle and could be travelled by foot, the preferred method was by boat. It was easier, more restful, and a most charming way to travel through the beauty of the waters that surrounded Bermuda. At its widest Bermuda was no more than a mile across, so any part of the land could be reached easily from the water.

Most people there lived simply in huts made with wooden frames covered in the wide fronds of the palmetto tree. They were easy to build but were not weatherproof. Some houses, such as the Tucker mansion, had been made of cedar and were much sturdier. However, cedar was a valuable commodity for export and the Government had demanded it be conserved. After Tucker’s term of office ended in 1619, Miles Kendall took over for a few months and morale sank

to a low level. Thankfully, Nathaniel Butler was appointed before terminal damage was done. He had the State House built to house the Assembly that he created, with two representatives chosen out of each tribe to attend the regular sessions. He upgraded the forts and expanded the local boatbuilding capability. People were persuaded to work together for the common good. Tribes were coerced into providing more support to enable the Government to perform its duties for the benefit of the whole of Bermuda. The people considered Butler their representative back to London and was greatly respected. There was much more to learn but Gus had begun to run out of steam. We thanked him and left the boatyard. I wondered if such a government would work in New England.

The weather had changed by the time we had finished with Gus. The dry, sunny start to the day had been overtaken by low cloud and a drizzling rain. It had cooled down noticeably. I told David I would meet alone with Governor Woodhouse's man, Jacob Hallet. I needed to keep my options open. While Hallet would be our liaison with the Governor, he was there to keep an eye on us. I wanted David unencumbered to do his own exploring so the less Hallet knew about David the better.

That night, I went outside the entrance to the boatyard. It was dark but a lantern had been lit over the gateway. A figure emerged from the deep shadows.

"Mr. Stanfield?"

I acknowledged the fact and the figure approached. Soft-spoken and nondescript in appearance, I could barely make out his features. He apologized for the secretive meeting but he said the Governor was most anxious that my investigations should be carried out with the utmost delicacy and not involve him in any way.

"I understand you have been given the locations of the two families you wish to investigate. How do you propose doing that?"

"Are there as yet unsettled shares in the Earl of Southampton's tribe?"

"There are unworked plots of land in every tribe. However, that



part of the island is popular. People moved to Southampton's tribe because the rat problem was much less there."

To answer his question I told him, "I propose to represent myself as a prospective tenant and approach existing tenants of adjacent shares to seek their advice. I will make it clear that I am investigating the right opportunity for myself and my family. I will use an assumed name, Jude Tattershall."

"Sounds reasonable. How do you propose making the journey to Southampton, at the other end of the island?"

"According to the map I have it would seem best to sail from St. George's along the north shore, across the Great Sound to Southampton. There I would go ashore and explore."

"You need to be careful. Captain Tucker, our former Governor, has land there. He is a suspicious man by nature and has his spies in St. George's. He would likely uncover any perceived threat to his privacy."

I acknowledged the risk. Mr. Hallet then admitted that there were large shareholdings in Southampton and most had some land that was as yet uncleared waiting for settlers. So, as long as I avoided Captain Tucker my plan should work. He would have a guide and a boat made available to me. The guide, Anthony Pedro, would meet me at the bridge on the east side of Coney Island at dawn, 7:00 am tomorrow, Friday 26 November. If I needed to meet with Mr. Hallet, Anthony would make the arrangements. With that, Mr. Hallet re-merged with the shadows and disappeared.

Back on *Swallow*, I told David what had happened and discussed likely scenarios. I was desperate to discover where James was. That he was with the Cooper family was a guess, based on a casual remark by Captain Johns, which might mean nothing. However, it seemed there were only two choices, the families with sons. If Cooper was not the one then it had to be Clark who was in Lord Paget's tribe. We would discuss tactics for that adventure once I had completed my visit to Southampton. If Cooper was the one, I would need to make sure I didn't cause a problem with Tucker. We agreed that

James should not be made aware that I was on the island until we rescued him.

The following morning at the appointed hour in the half light of dawn I met Anthony, a black man, who was in a small shallop waiting for me. I climbed aboard and we sailed along the shoreline heading in a generally westerly direction. It gave me an opportunity to find out more about Anthony and his people in Bermuda. He was quiet at first, replies to my questions short and evasive. However, my friendly persistence brought its reward. It helped that I was able to convince him that I was newly arrived on the island. The white population had developed an unfortunate attitude of superiority over the blacks which was deeply resented. My openness convinced Anthony that I had not yet succumbed to that dreaded disease. He was a free man, having been brought to Bermuda from the Caribbean because of his fishing skills, and paid to teach them to others. There were other free blacks brought to Bermuda because of specific skills much sought after, primarily in growing tobacco and sugar cane. However, in Anthony's estimation there were hundreds of his fellows including women and children on the island who were brought in as slaves, a free labor force exploited by farmers and the Government. They were overworked and disciplined savagely. To survive they stole food for which they were executed. The Government reacted by passing laws which even further restricted them, even the free blacks like Anthony. While we continued our journey what Anthony told me set me to thinking back on the time I had spent with my Indian friends at Wraxall Court. They too were, in effect, enslaved by their capture. Brought to England because of their knowledge, rather like Anthony. That knowledge then used by the English settlers in New England to subjugate their people. My somber reverie was interrupted.

Anthony had sailed us round what the map said was Spanish Point into a large bay called the Great Sound. A steady wind shifting to the southwest meant we had to tack our way across the Sound to the distant shore. We passed many small islands to the east heavily crowned with trees and thick undergrowth. To the west, a chain

of islands, including a larger one called Ireland. The sun made an appearance and the color of the water lightened accordingly, vivid blues and greens, clear to the bottom, the sandy floor showing a paler green close to land. Shoals of fish, larger grey shapes shied away from the boat as we passed. Anthony said they were hogfish and rockfish, many smaller and brightly colored. Late November, Christmas less than a month away, it could have been a summer's day in England. Anthony obviously knew these waters well as he steered confidently past numerous reefs and rocky outcrops. I could understand why he liked to fish, out on his boat away from the cruelties of society, living the life to which he was born.

According to my map, it seemed there was a small community established on the mainland behind the Brother Islands where Anthony deposited me on a small beach in an inlet close to where there seemed to be significant cultivation. He told me that he would be fishing in the Sound and would keep an eye out for my return to this spot. I had a bag at my shoulder carrying food and a flask of ale. We had been three hours on our journey. I was hungry and thirsty. On higher ground, a rocky outcrop, I sat looking out over the Sound as I ate. A voice from behind startled me. I turned and saw a young lad, about 12 years old, standing below me.

"And a good morning to you, young man," I said.

He climbed up and sat down beside me. I offered him some of my breakfast. He took a sip of my ale and thanked me. I asked him his name. Politely, he stood, took off his cap, held out his hand and said, "Sam, sir."

I shook his hand and told him my name was Mr. Jude Tattershall. He had been working his father's field since dawn and was in need of a rest, when he saw me sitting at his favorite lookout spot.

"Looking for pirates?" he asked.

I laughed and asked him whether he had ever seen any. He thought for a while.

"No, not yet, but the pirates don't normally come into the Great Sound."

“Oh, where do they go?”

“Mangrove Bay, over there behind Somerset Island, where they can’t be seen. There is a harbor at this end of Somerset on the south shore.”

I was intrigued. It seemed, according to my young friend, that there was a secret passageway through the extensive reefs that reached many miles out from the west shore. Pirates or privateers could slip in and out at night without being seen. I was surprised at his matter of fact certainty. Either he lived in a make-believe world or he was, in some way, party to local knowledge being kept from the authorities in St. George’s. Perhaps they knew but pretended they didn’t for reasons political or commercial. It bore further investigation. I decided I would put David on to it.

“Well, Sam. We have been idle long enough. You must go back to your fields and I must find Mr. Jamieson.”

“Mr. Jamieson, sir? He lives and works land on the boundary with Sandys’ tribe. If you walk along the path beside our fields, heading south, for several hundred yards you will come to the main road. Turn right and follow the road about half a mile or so and you will come to a village. Ask for him there.”

After leaving my new friend, I studied my map again. The land bordered the Overplus property that Captain Tucker had taken for himself. I needed to take great care. I found the road easily enough and walked the short distance to the village. It consisted of a few rude huts on open land that otherwise had not been fully cleared. There appeared to be a small chapel there, a hut slightly better built with a cross placed above the door. There were people about. A man dressed as a clergyman approached me and, with a disarming smile asked me my business. I said I was hoping to meet with Mr. Jamieson. The clergyman introduced himself as the Reverend George Stirk. He looked to be about my age and had a Scottish burr.

“Unfortunately, Mr. Jamieson is not here today. He has gone to St. George’s. Perhaps I can help you.”

I told Mr. Stirk my story and that it had been recommended I talk

to Mr. Jamieson. He offered to show me around the land holding owned by Sir Ralph Winwood, all of which Mr. Jamieson farmed as the tenant farmer. The land in the area was indeed extensively cultivated. I was told that tobacco had been the main crop but was being superseded by Indian maize and wheat, as tobacco bled nutrients from the soil. Mr. Jamieson had, with Sir Ralph's blessing, moved to more exotic crops, fruit and spices as well as wheat and vegetables. As we walked the property Mr. Stirk asked me about my background. I mentioned I was from the West Country. He laughed.

"I already gathered that, your speech gives you away. I believe you to be a Dorset man."

He allowed he was a Scot, but his studies at Oxford had softened the burr in his voice. Stirk was an Anglican by training but had taken to using Mr. Hughes' book of prayer. Not knowing about Mr. Hughes and his prayer book I asked about them.

"Reverend Lewis Hughes, God bless him, was until recently the only clergyman in Bermuda. He left to return to England last year. He has been greatly influential in advising successive governments in Bermuda to temper their dictatorial ways as well as providing counsel to citizens, rich and poor, in both the ways of clean living and the power and forgiveness of the good Lord above all. Unfortunately, he expressed his concern over the pomp of the Anglican church. Governors, especially Governor Tucker, saw the church as a part of the establishment over which they, like King James, had temporal responsibility."

"Was Mr. Hughes a Puritan, then?"

"Yes, he was and is."

"What about yourself?"

"Ah, I am a loyal member of the community I serve. That community includes the Tucker family who live close by. I provide the Anglican service to my parishioners."

I smiled to myself. He sounded a bit like the Patriarch in Dorchester, walking a fine line between belief and expediency.

"Mr. Stirk, I heard a rumor that Puritan families are being assisted

to come to Bermuda. I too am inclined to the Puritan service.”

Mr. Stirk stopped, took my arm and looked long and hard into my face. I smiled at the earnestness of his expression and asked him,

“Do you know Reverend Spurling?”

He relaxed and his sunny smile reappeared.

“I do indeed. In fact, through his good services we receive settlers of a Puritan disposition on a regular basis. In fact, such a family came to us a few weeks ago.”

Now we have it, I thought. I said nothing, waiting for him to fill the silence.

“Yes, Mr. and Mrs. Cooper and their son. I had known Mrs. Cooper when she a young woman. I had written to her after she married extolling the virtues of Bermuda and suggesting she and her husband would find an ideal place to settle.”

This did not sound like Sly. He went on.

“Mr. Cooper is not particular religious, but his wife is. I hope that the opportunities available to them will allow them to settle quickly and happily. Poor Mr. Cooper is inclined to speak first and think a little later. He has something of a temper but he clearly is devoted to his wife and family. The healthy climate and the hard work should do wonders for him.”

Mr. Stirk was not discrete. I wondered how he was able to survive with Captain Tucker as a parishioner; perhaps his transparent goodness.

“You see Mr. Tattershall, Mr. Cooper is a trifle large of girth and small of height.”

Strike one from my list. A moment of dejection, then, realizing I had made a significant step forward in finding my son, excitement. Before leaving, I wanted to understand better the relationship between the Puritans and the authorities. One of the possible Sly conspiracies we had discussed back in England involved some form of Puritan inspired unrest.

“Mr. Stirk, I’m sure you are right. Hard work is good for a man’s body as much as the soul. However, you imply some conflict exists

within you. You are an Anglican clergyman, but you seem supportive of Puritans. Does that put you at risk?"

Mr. Stirk shook his head. "I am supportive of purifying the Church of England, reducing the remnants of the high Catholic practices. I am not, Heaven forbid, a Separatist. I have used Mr. Hughes' book of prayer for the occasional Saturday service for my more Puritan minded parishioners. My Sunday service I use King James' Book of Common Prayer. Mr. Tattershall, I am not a rebel, although I am an admirer of the eminent Calvinist, Dr. Ames. Ultimately, we all worship the same Christ Jesus. The late Governor Bernard, Woodhouse's immediate and short-lived predecessor, arranged for four Anglican clergy, including myself, to come to Bermuda to replace Mr. Hughes. You will find that the remaining clergy in Bermuda feel much as I do. There is no basis for your concern about me or the strain of Puritanism that exists in Bermuda. To my knowledge there are no Separatists here."

I nodded. I told him I felt easier in my mind about bringing my family to Bermuda in such an accommodating religious environment. I thanked him for showing me round and said I might take the opportunity to meet with Mr. Jamieson back in St. George's. I was pleased with what Mr. Stirk had shown and told me. I informed him I planned to visit some other tribes to gain impressions that might differ from the good ones he had given me. Ultimately, it would depend on my convincing a shareholder back in England to take me on as a tenant farmer.

"One last question, are you aware of the presence of any pirates in these parts of the island?"

Mr. Stirk looked a bit startled and then laughed.

"You've been talking to Sam, haven't you? He has had a fixation on pirates all his life. I think he dreams he will become one. He has a romantic view of them. No. No pirates here."

With that, he wished me well on my journey of discovery and for my voyage back to England. I returned to where Anthony had deposited me. I had been away several hours. While I sat awaiting his

return I finished off my food and drink and thought through what I had learnt.

Mr. Clark was now my target. It seemed likely that Sly had used the Puritan assisted passage only as a means to get to Bermuda. I much doubted there was any conspiracy there. However, I wasn't sure about the pirates. Mr. Stirk seemed a little quick with his denial, his open face a little closed for a moment. Anthony saw me eventually and came to pick me up. He had had a productive time fishing. Six large rockfish. He said they made delicious eating. I complimented him on the amount he had caught.

"Mr. Tattershall," he said, "I have to tell you that fishing in Bermuda is different from anywhere else I have known. The seas are full of an extraordinary selection of the largest, juiciest fish in the world."

Thus spoke a truly happy fisherman. We sailed back to where I had met him at dawn. I said I had other trips to make and I understood from Mr. Hallet that he would be my guide for those as well. He said he would be pleased to continue to do so and told me where he kept his boat. To contact him, I should leave a note there, but to make sure it was left before dawn otherwise, as often as not, he would be off fishing all day. We parted as friends and I returned to *Swallow* with the gift of two large fish.

David and the crew had been busy. The quartermaster had found them at the boatyard, inspected the merchandise we had brought, found it acceptable, negotiated an agreeable price and removed it all. The price was to be paid in Bermuda produce. He was aware that we needed to take foodstuff to Cape Ann when we left. But that would not cover the value of what we had brought, so a supply of cedar wood and tobacco would be provided. I told David what I had learned and we talked through how to approach the Clark family. I was comfortable that we were now close to finding and rescuing James. I felt elation. It had been too long. God protect James for these last few hours or days before he is back with me. I prepared to locate the Clarks. The map showed the large plot of land, 250 acres, that Lord Paget had kept for himself. It lay close to a little inlet,



unnamed on the map.

David said that he would explore on his own. He had intended to borrow a horse but he found to his surprise that there were none on the island. He decided to walk and would attempt to meet up with me on the Paget land but we agreed it wasn't vital if we missed each other. He wanted to take provisions to make camp as he believed he would be on the road overnight. I was unhappy with that. I prayed that we would have James back with us within the next few days. If so, we would need to be ready to sail, aim to visit Cape Ann in New England, drop off their supplies and head back to England taking the southern route to avoid the December weather in the North Atlantic. I wanted to be home before Annie's confinement in February. David agreed to return by the end of the day.

As for the survey Mr. Jacobson had done on *Swallow*, he had reported back that apart from some re-caulking needed, all was well. The bowsprit was, as our carpenter had insisted, as good as new. All damage caused by the storm was close to being repaired by the crew and our longboat would be rebuilt within a few days.

That evening I walked to where Anthony kept his boat to leave a note saying I wanted him for Monday, 29 November. I would meet him at Coney Island at dawn. It was Sunday and no work allowed, but for essentials. We attended the service at St. Peter's Church, on a hill by the State House. The Governor was there but ignored me. The church was crowded, not enough seating. I stood at the back with the crew. It was a long service with a longer sermon. I was distracted, thinking about my son.

Next morning, Anthony and I set off the way we had gone the previous day. Even in the lee of the land, the going was rough. Little time for talk as we were both active in keeping the boat upright and moving forward. While Anthony steered, I handled the main sheet, bailed and was moveable ballast. When we nosed round Spanish Point, we left the shelter of the land and headed into a strong, wet wind. We managed to tack our way down to a chain of islands called Elizabeth then reached our way East down a long natural,

well sheltered harbor—Paget’s Port. We sailed past a sizeable community on our larboard side to the head of the harbor which became a little inlet surrounded by thick undergrowth. A path led along the water’s edge. Anthony dropped me off and said he would return periodically to check whether I was ready to go.

Following the path, I quickly came to a road and open fields, heavily cultivated with a wheat harvest gathered sometime previously. The fields were now being prepared for the winter growing season. Such was the climate and growing conditions Bermuda benefited from having two harvests in a year. It was mid-morning and the weather had not improved, cold, windy and raining. It took a while for me to come across someone to help me find what I was looking for. A laborer walking down the road with a hoe and a heavy bag over his shoulder, accompanied by his wife and child. I greeted him and asked him whether I was now on Lord Paget’s land. He took the time to offload his burden. He sat on a boulder, took out a pipe, filled and lit it before answering me. His family had moved on.

“And who might you be, sir? Anyone living here knows this is Lord Paget’s land.”

I repeated my story.

“Well, the land is pretty well taken. Unfortunately, almost as many people decide to move on from Bermuda as come. Which explains a lot. It is hard work and people come with the wrong expectations.”

I said I was told to talk to a farmer by the name of Garth.

“Garth, you say. Yes, I know him. Garth farms over the hill on the south shore. He has a bigger farm to manage than I do. Mine is small enough that I and my family can manage it with a couple of blacks. He has indentured laborers from England working for him. Go and talk to him if you please. If I’m around when you get back, I’ll be happy to talk further to you.”

With that, pipe still in mouth, he shouldered his burden and walked on down the road, following his family. I followed his directions past fields and through a dense patch of jungle. Close in on either side, it seemed impenetrable. If the island had been so covered

when first settled I could understand how difficult it must have been to open up land for cultivation. Through the jungle I came to another road across my path and beyond that another farm. Nearby, along the road, a dwelling. A woman was pounding maize under a canopy with a child playing close by.

“Good morning, madam.”

She looked up, surprised. She hadn't been aware of my coming. The child ran and hid in her skirts.

“I am looking for Mr. Garth. Do you know where he might be?”

She stared at me not speaking. Was she shy? A man came out of the house, bleary eyed and unsteady on his feet.

“She is deaf and dumb. She can't help you.”

I expressed my sympathy for her condition and apologized for any confusion caused.

The man scowled and asked what I wanted. I told him I was looking for Mr. Garth. He said he was down on the southern fields working with a new laborer. He jerked his thumb in the general direction and went back into the house. Drunk, it would seem. I turned back to the woman and smiled. She pushed a lock of hair from her face, gave me a timid smile and returned to her pounding, the child still locked in her skirts and I went where directed. The rain stopped and the wind occasionally gusting hard enough to unbalance me. I caught sight of the water, white, pounding along the reef line and light blues and greens close to land. I saw some figures in the distance and walked towards them. I introduced myself and Mr. Garth did likewise. I said what I was there for, it being suggested I meet with him to obtain his advice. He turned to his laborer and asked him what he thought of my quest. No answer but a smile. He then introduced me.

“This is Mr. Clark, recently from England with his family, come to work for me.”

As I shook his hand I was confused. I had never met Sly/Seth but I had certainly met his brother, Caleb. Mr. Clark looked nothing like him.

“How do you do, Mr. Clark? I am recently from England myself. We arrived a week or so after the *Concord*. Did you make the voyage on her?”

“Yes.”

“How did your family cope? I ask because I hope to bring my family out to Bermuda should I find the right position here as a tenant farmer.”

“Passing well, sir. My boy was sick but survived, praise be to God.”

“I have a son, five years old, delicate. I worry the journey might be too much for him.”

“My son, Matthew, is a strong boy. Eight years old. The journey was a tough one.” Mr. Garth, impatient, interrupted. “Clark, why don’t you continue with what we discussed while I answer Mr. Tattershall’s questions.”

Mr. Clark left. I was confused and disheartened. Now what? Mr. Garth, unaware of my distraction, proceeded to talk about his farm, what he grew, what crops were commercially viable, what his relationship was like with the landowner and how important it was that it should be strong and trusting. I fed questions but didn’t pay much attention to the answers. I gave the appearance of gazing with keen interest over the fields but my mind was churning. I had assumed that Clark was Sly. He wasn’t. Cooper and Clark were the only two families with sons joining the *Concord* in Dartmouth. What had happened? What was I missing? I thanked Mr. Garth for his time and congratulated him on his fine farm and parted, returning up the path, past the house, the woman and child gone, back to the road. I found David sitting on a wall waiting for me.

— CHAPTER 27 —

David and I removed ourselves to a secluded spot.

“How did you find me? Our meeting seems opportune.”

“I saw you on the road ahead of me talking to a woman. So I made myself scarce until you came back.”

He covered his journey, which was uneventful apart from the flies and mosquitoes which were voracious. I smiled in sympathy.

“Best to go by boat.”

“Thank you for telling me.”

Apart from the banter, it was clear by my demeanor that I was troubled. David commented on it. I told him what I had found out. He thought for a while.

“We know, or at least we believe, three families boarded the *Concord* in Dartmouth. Two of the families had one son each. The Coopers and the Clarks. You are satisfied that neither is the family we seek?”

I nodded, despairing. James seemed as far away as ever. Could it be that we were wrong? Maybe Sly didn't board the *Concord*. I thought back on how we decided on our plan of action. Everything was there to say we were right. I blurted out, “My God, it will be James' birthday on the 6th of December. Five years old. I can't bear the horror he is going through.”

David calmed me down by telling me to go through all the steps in our search for James, which I did. He pondered for a while, then asked, “Why did we discount the Smith family?”

They went aboard the *Concord* with one child, a daughter.”

“How do we know that?”

“It was on the manifest.”

“What if the manifest was wrong? What if Sly purposely provided the wrong information to further hide his tracks? Maybe he didn’t know what child he would be able to find when his passage was booked. Either way, he could easily pass it off as a clerical error when he boarded.”

I agreed and felt better. I said we needed to go back to St. George’s and find out where the Smith family had gone. We walked back to the head of the harbor and waited for Anthony.

He was surprised there were two of us but pleased. It would be a wild ride back, wind up and gusting something fierce. We had been sheltered down in the inlet so hadn’t realized quite how much and how quickly. We needed the extra crew both as ballast and to bale. We had an exciting and fast sail to Coney Island where Anthony dropped us off. I told him I wanted to meet Hallet at his earliest convenience. He said he would pass on the message.

When we got back to the yard we were met with consternation. *Swallow* was not dockside where she should have been. Mr. Jacobson told us there had been a most unfortunate accident. In the high wind, a barque had broken free of its mooring and drifted into *Swallow*, moored dockside with nowhere to go, causing serious damage to the hull, above and below the waterline. Luckily no one was hurt. *Swallow* was beached, before she sank, a little way down the inlet. Mr. Jacobson had just returned from a thorough survey of the damage. It was localized but serious. Damage to the frame as well as the hull planking.

“How long before she can be repaired?”

“With the work I have now and the scarcity of labor, at least six weeks. Possibly more. *Swallow* is made from teak and pine. We do not have teak and the pine we order in from America, when we can get it. All our boats are built from cedar.”

“What about using cedar?”

“Yes, but the Governor has forbidden use of local cedar except for boats built in and for Bermuda. Otherwise, it is for export only.”

“I will talk to the Governor.”

Damn, damn, damn, I thought as I walked away. David had gone immediately to check the damage for himself. I followed him. A wooden frame cradled *Swallow*. Quick thinking by someone for, as it was run aground, support timbers were rammed against the hull to stop it from tipping over, then adjusted and secured. The tide had ebbed sufficiently to uncover much of the hull damage which looked serious. I thought about the tide—not much fall, maybe three feet in total. At high tide water would get in which was not good for repairs with the hull partially under water, the boat would have to be careened onto its good side. J.B. had organized the crew to offload supplies. Mr. Jacobson had told him to set up camp above the beach. He had sent a man down to show them how to build a hut, framed and covered in palmetto leaves. I met with J.B. and David and told them that we would be stuck here at least six weeks, which took us into January. Bad time to be sailing north, as we were expecting to do. We agreed to put off any plans about where we would go with *Swallow* until she had been repaired. Our main task was to set up a semi-permanent camp for the crew and to have them work with the boatyard on repairing *Swallow*. J.B. said that Chips had already assessed it was a major repair and beyond his scope without the services and facilities of a fully equipped yard.

We discussed what had to be offloaded. The hold cleared but the guns would have to stay. Luckily, the supplies for New England had not been delivered and the merchandise we had brought over already removed. I asked if it would make sense to have the crew live aboard. I was told it depended on whether or not *Swallow* needed to be careened. I said that the supplies needed a better shelter than the huts being suggested. Drawing on a piece of paper, I sketched out the Indian huts we had built in Saco, New England so many years previously. Poles, ten feet long, stuck into the ground about 12 inches apart in a circle about 15 feet in diameter, bent over, their upper ends

meeting in the middle and lashed in a ring at the top forming a hole in the resulting dome. Thickly woven palmetto leaves to be stitched to the frame. A canvas door to allow entry. J.B. studied the sketch, grinned and said he remembered the huts from when they had returned in *Rosie* to pick us up. He would get Obi to detail some crew to work on to it.

“One thing,” he said. “I don’t think we need a hole in the top. That was to allow smoke out from the fire pit inside the hut. I don’t believe we will be lighting any fires inside this hut.”

He was right and the sketch modified accordingly. A message came for me to meet with Hallet in the same place at the same time that evening. We had returned from Paget at about 4:30pm, sun beginning to set. It was now about 6:00. Daylight mostly gone. The stores that had been offloaded were under a tarpaulin. The hut or huts would be built the next day. David resumed command of the crew and I left them to it. Poor Annie, there was simply no way I could be back with her before her confinement. I had to get a note to her, carried by any vessel passing through Bermuda. I thought about how to approach the Smiths. It made good sense about it being Sly, but it was by no means certain. My gut said that I should use David for this one. At the appointed hour I met with Hallet. He already knew about the mishap to *Swallow* and commiserated. I told him I needed to talk to the Governor.

“Very unlikely. What do you want to talk to him about?”

I told him we would need cedar for repairs. If the Governor wanted me gone the quickest way to accomplish that was to allow me to repair my boat. I was concerned and wanted to apologize to him for the inconvenience our delayed departure would cause him. In the darkness, I was aware I was being studied. Hallet obviously thought my remark might have been less than sincere. I went on,

“I have found out that neither the Cooper nor the Clark families are the ones I am after. I need to know where the Smith family went when they left the *Concord*.”

“Tell me about the efforts you have made so far.”



I gave him a brief description of each journey. I emphasized the straightforward approach made, the few people I had met and the minimum amount of time actually engaged in conversation with anyone. Hallet said that was good and would report back to the Governor. I would receive a message on the morrow where to find the Smith family.

The following day, true to his word, a note was delivered. It said that Mr. Jacobson would be informed to use the cedar necessary to repair *Swallow* and I would be charged the export price. With respect to the Smiths' whereabouts, the Governor was concerned that I should not venture there as he had a report back from Captain Tucker complaining about my presence. I showed the note to David. We agreed it probably meant that the Smiths were at the western end of the island, in Sir Edwin Sandys' tribe. My friend Reverend Stirk must have passed word that a stranger had come by. A suspicious man was Captain Tucker, which meant he had something to hide. I would send a note to Hallet via Anthony to meet and get a better understanding of the situation. My sole purpose was to find my son. He must realize that there would be little he should or could do to prevent me from doing that.

### **Journal entry—*December 1624***

I left a pre-dawn message on Anthony's boat and a terse reply was received later that day. The name of a tavern and a time, 7:00pm. Gus told me where the tavern was, over the Coney Island bridges on the main island. A small, rough and ready structure, a canopy over sandy ground with some tables and benches. At one end, a counter with a shelf behind carrying a number of bottles. A few people there when I arrived, early. I ordered a drink, some kind of rum concoction, sat and waited. Hallet arrived shortly after 7:00. He apologized for the terseness of the note. He said he had come of his own volition and was not representing the Governor. Woodhouse was paranoid about

Tucker. He was aware that something, likely nefarious, was happening on Somerset Island, but was worried about Tucker throwing his weight around and having his powerful backers in England make life a misery for him. For that reason he could not countenance my stirring up a hornet's nest. Hallet said the man was blind to my desperate desire to rescue James. Hallet, with a son of his own, was better able to sympathize. However, he said I needed to be patient. While now was not the time, the situation could change in the next week or so. It should make little difference to me. I had nowhere to go until *Swallow* was repaired. Finally, he warned me that the Governor had instructed the town marshal to ensure I did not leave St. George's Island. Anthony had been forbidden from any further contact with me.

Very much dismayed, I asked, "In that case, how am I to make contact with you?"

"I regret to say that the Governor has told me to cease further engagement with you. Officially, therefore, this meeting is not happening."

I gnawed the corner of my lower lip and sat with my hands round my mug of rum looking deeply into the dark depths puzzling what to do next. Mr. Hallet watched me.

"Mr. Stanfield, or rather Mr. Tattershall, as I believe we should call you, I will do what I can to mitigate the Governor's orders. The marshal will appoint two men to watch you who will not be too zealous in the discharge of their duties, nor will they make it difficult for you to spot them. But be careful. If the Governor suspects you of any disobedience he will clap you in prison and have you removed from Bermuda at the earliest opportunity. Do not try to contact me. I will find time and occasion to contact you. Do not try to see Anthony. You would risk him losing his priceless freedom."

With that he stood and left without another word. I remained seated, thinking through what had been said. In spite of my utter disappointment at the delay, Hallet was right, I had nowhere to go. I returned to *Swallow* where I found David, sitting on a barrel smoking a pipe looking out over the water. The wind had died, clouds gone, a

star-filled night sky. I told him all.

“Isaac. I know you too well. You have a plan worked out to deal with this minor obstacle.”

“Yes, it involves you to a great extent, if you are prepared?”

“Of course.”

I told him I wanted him to go in disguise or unnoticed to Somerset. We needed to know what mischief was being hatched. Better to know what we would have to contend with before rescuing James. Also, there might be unintended consequences resulting from such a rescue that might make the situation for James even worse. When we rescued him we would probably have to hide him until *Swallow* was set to sail, the less time in hiding the better. David said he understood. He would arrange to have J.B. let it be known, should anyone ask, that he, David, had suffered a serious blow to the head and was recuperating in his cabin while he was off on his Somerset errand. About the flies? He had been given some foul-smelling liquid in a small bottle which he was told to smear on his face and keep the rest of his skin covered. He had gone by the time I was up the next morning, 2 December.

I spent time with J.B. and Obi. I advised them to tell the crew to refer to me as Mr. Tattershall when the marshal's watchdogs appeared. A man, looking like a soldier, wandered into the yard and left as soon as he found me, to return an hour or so later to make sure I was still there. Later in the day, a different soldier came in to do the same thing. I imagined that I could dress someone of my size in my clothes and hat and they would be none the wiser. They saw what they expected to see and I wondered how they would check for my presence after dark.

Obi had the crew make several huts for storage. Once they got the hang of it, a hut could be raised in an hour. The result was a much sturdier weatherproof structure. The stores were moved into the huts. Accommodation on *Swallow* was made more comfortable. A tarpaulin covered frame was built round the damaged portion of the hull, allowing work to proceed regardless of weather. It meant

the hold was secure. Mr. Bradley had set up a cookhouse with mess tables and benches brought ashore and clustered close by. J.B. had instructed the crew that Mr. Tremaine was in his bed recuperating from an injury he had suffered to his head on board the previous night. They should respect the Skipper's condition and avoid the main cabin. Mr. Bradley happy to play the role of medical assistant to a fictitious invalid, swearing at any crewman making too much noise too close to the aft end of *Swallow*. I was concerned that a portion of the damaged hull was below water even at low tide. Chips told me that once the damaged frames had been repaired or replaced it would be necessary to haul *Swallow* above the high water mark.

"How so?"

"Well, sir. Work is already being planned for that. The cradle is being redesigned to carry the full weight of the boat and be moveable. A wooden ramp laid in front of the boat up the beach and dug down below the keel and cradle supports. Round spars laid across the ramp under and ahead of the keel and the cradle. A capstan will be set up at the top of the ramp, braced by lines lashed to trees. *Swallow* will then be hauled up the ramp about 20 paces or so. As each spar comes free it will be moved up the ramp to repeat its function as a roller."

I was intrigued to see that in action, but it wasn't going to happen for several days. It would take that time to get everything ready. The following day, I hoped David would be back. The ramp to move *Swallow* was nearing completion, internal work was proceeding to Chip's satisfaction. I had developed a childish game with my unsuspecting guard dogs. I took to calling them Plod and Clod. When Plod (or Clod) arrived in the morning, he would wander around looking for me, I would hide, moving from place to place, a childish game of hide and seek. Eventually, I would appear and he would gratefully retire. Silly really, but boredom and the stress of not being actively engaged in the search for my son did that to me.

David returned that evening. He was disguised as a common seaman and in the dusk I didn't recognize him at first. We retired to his

cabin where Mr. Bradley bought him a bowl and a pitcher of water. He stripped, washed, dressed, and sat with a large glass of wine. Mr. Bradley wrapped a bandage round his head and went to prepare a meal for us both.

“Well?” I asked.

“An interesting journey.”

He then settled down to tell me all that had happened.

He had decided on a story that tied him to Hook in Dartmouth. He would say that he, Josiah Camshoe, had followed Sly in another ship, *Swallow*, as part of the crew. Hook was sending him to be a part of whatever it was that Sly was joining. Now, disguised as a sailor, he kept out of the way until he was close to Sandys’ tribe. He had left St. George’s in the early hours so he was four hours on the road before dawn. He couldn’t ask directions because he didn’t know where he was going. With the dawn he saw people working the fields as he walked. Occasionally, he would pass someone. Most didn’t bother to pay much attention. David had a talent for appearing unremarkable and unthreatening.

Based on my descriptions of my earlier trip to Southampton, David said he must have been in the offing mid-morning. Fields well cultivated on either side of the road. It seemed tobacco was the favored crop, but many others he didn’t immediately recognize. On a whim, he turned left onto a well-worn path which turned into a long, wide, pleasant avenue bordered by fig trees. He climbed a gently rising slope and as he crested it, he saw the south coast bright and breezy before him. The avenue led to an imposing mansion, surrounded by cultivated land, orchards and a vineyard. He realized this must be Captain Tucker’s famed estate. He was in the Overplus. Mindful of the need to stay clear of Tucker, he turned to retrace his steps. Too late. There was a shout and two burly laborers came up to him.

“What the hell are you doing here? This is private land. Who are you?”

Suitably abject, David protested his innocence, told his story and said he was lost.

“Hmm, a likely story. Come with us.”

David meekly followed the leader, with the other close behind. He was led to a cluster of thatched huts close to the mansion, which seemed to be outbuildings for the farm. A man, seemingly an overseer, stood waiting as they approached. David’s captors told the man they had found David trespassing, that he had a story which sounded fishy.

“Well? Tell me your story.”

David did.

“A likely tale. What boat did you come in on?”

“The *Swallow*.”

“Don’t know it. Was that before or after the *Concord*?”

“After. As I said I was sent to join Mr. Smith, who was off the *Concord* out of Dartmouth.”

The overseer obviously unimpressed

“I have no idea who this Smith person is. Do you know anything about him? Where was he going? Who was he to work for? You are being unconvincing. What’s your name, anyway?”

“Josiah Camshoe, sir. I’m afraid I don’t know where I am going apart from being advised to go to Sir Edwin Sandys’ tribe. I was told I would find him there.”

“Well, you aren’t in Sandys. It’s down the road.”

He studied me, eyes narrowed.

“There is something wrong here. You, by the looks, are a sailor. What’s a sailor doing wandering around Bermuda? All workers here are indentured, employed, or slaves. You don’t seem to be any of them. Who sent you here?”

“A Mr. Hook, sir.”

At that moment, a stooped gentleman appeared, grey beard. He had been a powerful man in his youth, square shouldered, barrel chest, now wasted, a malevolent man with an overly florid face. He did not look well, leaning heavily on a stick. He glared at David and turned to his overseer.

“Bring him inside.”

He turned and limped back to the house. The overseer, surprised, looked more closely at David.

“Christ. That’s unusual. You better watch yourself. Captain Tucker is not to be trifled with. He would as soon hang you as a trespasser as let you go.”

He seemed puzzled about something. He kept glancing at David as he led him into the house. David was startled. A fine house, the glow and scent of cedar wood everywhere. Walls, plastered and white. Cedar beams holding a white painted ceiling. Wooden floors, also of cedar. He was brought into a comfortable study, with book lined walls and a wide window looking south towards the water. High-backed wing chairs on either side of a large, raised hearth. A fire burned brightly, though it was not particularly cold. The old man obviously felt it. He was seated when they entered. He glanced at the overseer.

“You. Leave us and wait till I call you. Tell Frobisher to bring me my medicine.”

Clearly, one did not argue with Captain Tucker. The overseer left, after another quick, puzzled look. Tucker turned to stare at David.

“Take your hat off. Come here. Stand by the light.”

He inspected David, looking into his face and examining every feature. David said it was like being dissected.

“You mentioned the name Hook.”

David didn’t respond. Tucker smiled grimly and continued, “You are silent. Perhaps wisely. Perhaps not. We shall see.”

He brooded, waiting for his medicine. Frobisher, in the uniform of a steward, brought it, a glass on a silver tray. It smelt suspiciously like brandy. Frobisher was waved away with one hand while the other clutched his medicine. A large dose was taken. Tucker set it down on the small table beside him, leant back and belched.

“Now, Mr. Camshoe, if that be your real name. Tell me about Mr. Abraham Hook. More to the point tell me about you.”

David, thinking fast, tried to remember what I had told him. He said, “Mr. Hook was introduced to me in a tavern in Dartmouth. I

had been talking about seeking a job. I was avoiding the press. I had been in the Navy and didn't want to go back."

"How do I know you know Hook? Describe him to me."

David thought for a minute.

"I would say he was aptly named."

David had not asked me what I had meant when I mentioned that to him. He hoped that Tucker wouldn't, who rasped a dry chuckle.

"You're right there. You wanted a job, you say. What sort of job?"

"I'm a sailor, sir. I want a ship, a good crew, good prospects and the promise of adventure."

"Sounds romantic and bloody nonsense. I have been studying you. I am a good judge of character. You are certainly a Navy man, not a common sailor. You are not what you seem. I don't trust you."

He started coughing. He rang a bell. Frobisher returned with the overseer. Tucker gasped, "Take Mr. Camshoe and lock him up. Feed and water him. I will want to talk to him again later."

It was David's turn to be surprised. He was intrigued. Without fuss he allowed himself to be taken outside to a sturdy hut and locked in. As the overseer closed the door, David asked him his name. The man stopped, thought for a moment and said Trescothick. David smiled and nodded. Trescothick came back into the hut.

"You are David Tremaine, by God. I thought I recognized you. Without the hat the memory came back."

David grinned. "Trescothick. I remember you. Wait, Jason, yes? You were one of the sailors we rescued from the pirates in Bilbao back in '15 or '16."

Trescothick reached out and grasped David's hand.

"It was 1614. We escaped overland from Bilbao to La Rochelle then shipped out on the *Sweet Rose*. Seems a lifetime ago but I will never forget it. Saved from being rowed to death on a pirate galley. I was never able to thank you enough for what you did. You and that young lad, can't remember his name. I owe you a great deal, my life, in fact."

David shrugged off the thanks with a smile.



“Secretive as ever, I see. Clearly you are here on some mission. I don’t want to know but am happy to help in any way possible. Bit difficult as I am in the trusted employ of Captain Tucker. The fact you’re here implies some sort of caper with or without his involvement. As I remember it, you were chasing pirates. Still doing so?”

Trescothick left the question hanging. David was in a quandary. Useful to have such a well-placed ally but only if he could be trusted. He would have to wait and see.

“Jason, no, you have another name, Argie, isn’t it?”

Trescothick grinned and nodded. “Good memory.”

David inclined his head in acknowledgement and continued. He didn’t want to get trapped into talk of yesteryear.

“I must say, really good to see you after all this time. I’m sure we have many stories to share over several tankards. Right now, I’m searching for someone. It was only by chance that I happened on Captain Tucker’s property. The fact he knew one of the links to the man I seek surprised me.”

Trescothick nodded.

“Captain Tucker is astute. He doesn’t believe your story, obviously. Not sure how you expect to continue your search, if that is really what you are about, but having aroused my master’s suspicions I doubt he will want to let you go.”

At that moment, Frobisher returned from the house and called to Trescothick that Captain Tucker wanted him. With a grimace of regret Trescothick told David to be patient, locked the door and walked away. David sat on the floor of the hut, back against a wall in thought. Tucker knew Hook and Hook had pirate connections. Sly had been sent under cover by Hook to engage in something illicit. There had been strong rumors back in England that Bermuda was a base for privateers. Tucker’s successor as Governor, Butler, was known to have been involved before he was appointed, as had other Governors. There was a thin line separating privateers from pirates. Both involved smuggling, as well. He was torn. David’s experience and interest pushed him to want to find out what was going

on. Since his mission was to find and help rescue James, he needed to make sure that there were no unfortunate, unintended consequences in doing so. Argie Trescothick was the key to that. He could only wait and play the cards as they were dealt. Next morning, Trescothick came to the hut, let himself in, handed a plate of food and a tankard of ale to David and sat down beside him.

“Sorry for the long delay. Captain Tucker sent you away because he had one of his turns coming on and he hates any show of weakness.”

“Weakness?”

“As you probably saw, he is not a well man. After you were confined, he was put to bed and I had to go find the doctor. I’ve been up most of the night with it all.”

He settled back, stretched his legs out and continued.

“In his moments of lucidity, Captain Tucker asked about you. You worry him and I don’t know why. I have been working for him for several years. He brought me with him when he came back to Bermuda after being Governor here. My job is to look after all the staff and manage the plantations. He has other interests which I am not supposed to know anything about. What I find out I keep to myself.”

“What did he ask about me?”

“He wanted to know what I thought about you. He was puzzled. He felt you were pretending to be a much lesser person than you actually are. Your meek attitude much belied by the character he saw in your face. He asked why I had spent so much time with you when I had been sent to lock you up. Frobisher had admitted that he had seen me deep in conversation with you. I said I had been trying unsuccessfully to find out who you were.”

David shook his head. His subterfuge was obviously woefully weak. Trescothick misunderstood and said, “You will need to give me something that will allay his suspicions enough to let you go.”

David thought that if Trescothick had wanted to, he could have admitted to knowing him, but he didn’t. He looked long and hard at Trescothick, who didn’t flinch but gazed back with an open, enquiring look.

“Argie, I need to trust you. You were perceptive. I am on a mission to find a missing child.”

Trescothick laughed in disbelief, and got to his feet. He looked down at David and said sadly, “Come on, David. Tell me the truth or tell me nothing. But please don’t insult my intelligence with a cock and bull story.”

“Argie, sit down. I am telling you the truth. That lad you remember from the *Sweet Rose* and La Rochelle—his name is Isaac Stanfield. It is his child that we seek.”

Trescothick sat down heavily.

“I remember Isaac. We had a drink together at the Minerva in Plymouth. A bright lad. I remember he asked me why I was called Argie. ‘Jason and ...’ I said. He got it immediately. You better tell me about his child.”

David told him the basics. How James was kidnapped and the reasons we thought why. How we had worked out how he came to Bermuda and our belief that the Smith family was the only likely family left of the three that boarded the *Concord* in Dartmouth. He said that Isaac had been prevented from leaving St. George’s because he had created waves that had disturbed Mr. Tucker when he met up with the Reverend Stirk.

“Ah! George Stirk. He’s a bit of a troublemaker. At least Captain Tucker thinks so. Stirk is in a court battle with the current Governor, Woodhouse, over tobacco payments due to the Bermuda government from local farmers. One would think that Stirk represents Tucker’s interests because he is fighting for the farmers. But, for some reason Tucker does not want any agitation which would cause Woodhouse to become overly interested in this part of Bermuda.”

David went on. Woodhouse would not let us know where Smith had gone, which farmer he was indentured to, but his reaction with respect to Stirk had pointed the way to the west end of the islands—Southampton or Sandys tribes. Our initial objective was to find out where James actually was and if he was being mistreated or in any danger. Trescothick thought for a while.

“David, I think you need to trust me to help you. I am ideally placed to do so. I don’t know Smith, but I sure as hell know all the farmers between here and Ireland Island. I can placate Tucker and tell him I will escort you back to St. George’s. Give me a few days and I will get word to you about what I find and what your next steps might be.”

David recognized the merits of Trescothick’s advice and agreed.

“Give me a description of James. When was he born? However much is beaten into a child, if asked their birthday, they will give an honest, reflex answer.”

David tried to describe James but remembering how I had said he was the image of Aby he described her. Golden brown hair, big brown eyes in an oval face, the hint of freckles on his nose. He recalled that I had mentioned James’ birthday a day or two back.

David was given bread and cheese with another tankard at lunch and left alone. Early afternoon, Trescothick returned. Captain Tucker had eventually agreed to David being taken back to St. George’s. A shallop was to take David and Trescothick as far as Coney Island. A note was to be delivered to Governor Woodhouse requesting David be confined to St. George’s which Trescothick would deliver before returning to the Overplus the following day. As David finished his account, he suddenly realized something, slapping hand to head.

“A message has gone to the Governor to confine the seaman Camshoe to St. George’s. We need to have one of the crew be Camshoe. They won’t know what Camshoe looks like.”

I thought Obi would be ideal. He was called to the cabin with J.B. They were given enough background to answer any questions put to Obi under his new name. The crew were to be informed that on pain of death Obi should be referred to as Camshoe in the presence of anyone other than crew. They were tickled to be part of a plot. It was as well because the following morning, Plod arrived and demanded to see Mr. Camshoe, who was pointed out to him. Plod went up to him and asked his name.

“Who wants to know?” said Obi.

“Mind your lip, I’m on official business. Now, what’s your name?”

“Camshoe.”

“Where were you yesterday?”

“Visiting Captain Tucker.”

“Right, Camshoe. I have been ordered to make sure you do not leave St. George’s Island until further notice. You and Mr. Tattershall both.”

Plod plodded off.

My agitation over being so close to James but unable to do anything about it was almost unendurable. I craved action, not sitting on my hands, trusting someone I barely remembered. David tried to keep me engaged in what was happening in the boatyard. The ramp had been built but the cradle was causing problems, which were slowly resolved. The mechanics of it all became a distraction. Then, the capstan couldn’t be anchored securely enough. Substantial blocks and tackle were rigged from a stout tree and tested using *Swallow’s* anchor cable. The bitter end of the cable led back through the anchor cable hawse to *Swallow’s* capstan. It looked like it might work.

On 4 December, a note was delivered from Argie Trescothick for David to meet him that afternoon at a tavern in Flatts village. I was under guard so David went alone.

On his return, we went to his cabin. He told me, “Well now. We are making progress. Argie has found where the Smith family were taken. They have been indentured to Mr. William Eli who lives on land by a harbor in Sandys’ tribe on Somerset Island. Argie went to talk to Eli, ostensibly about the tobacco duty. Seemed fair enough, as Eli was growing some tobacco. While there, Eli showed him round the plantation. The harbor along the western boundary of his property was landlocked and sheltered. There was a small pinnacle at anchor and two shallops. Argie told Eli that he had heard that he had recently taken on the Smith family from England. Were they better quality than the usual lot that came over? As they talked and walked, they came to a hut, recently constructed. Mr. Eli said this was where the Smith family lived. At the sound of their voices a woman came out. A child followed her and was ordered back into the hut, not

before he noticed the boy's arm was in a sling. He enquired about the boy. The woman was surly and didn't want to say anything. Eli, seemingly to show his authority in front of Argie, demanded to see the boy. The woman became agitated and looked around for help. Eventually, she called to the boy to come out. He did, slowly and fearfully. He was dirty and had been mistreated. A scab on his head, clothes torn and filthy. No shoes, scratches and bruises on his legs. Argie, with children of his own, was horrified. He bent down and examined the child, who shrank away, then seeing he was not going to be mistreated, relaxed. He asked him his name. The woman said it was Peter. Argie asked the boy if that was his name. The boy looked into Argie's eyes then slowly nodded. The boy's red rimmed eyes were a deep brown. Argie asked Peter how old he was. The woman said '8'. Argie asked Peter if he was 8. Peter glanced the woman and then back at Argie. He slowly nodded.

"When is your birthday?"

Peter said without thinking, "December sixth."

"Why, that is in a few days. How old will you be?"

Peter replied, "Five," then realized he had said something wrong. The woman reacted badly, but too late. Argie by now was becoming disturbed. There was something really wrong here. He knew then that Peter was likely James, the Stanfield child, but he didn't know what to do. He stood up and turned to Eli, who was watching through narrowed eyes.

"This is strange, the boy seems to be being mistreated. But it's not my concern, the family is your responsibility. Let's move on."

Eli glared at the woman and turned down the track away from the hut. Once out of earshot, Argie stopped Eli.

"It really is none of my business, but I am the father of young children and am angry. I believe there is something back there that needs to be attended to. What do you propose to do about it?"

Mr. Eli was unhappy. Argie had the feeling that he was upset because he had been embarrassed by the incident, rather than at the treatment of the child.

“Mr. Eli, do you think that woman is the child’s mother? She appears young, no more than 20. If she was right about the child’s age she would have been about 12 when she gave birth. I find that difficult to believe. If the boy is right and my instincts tell me he is, why would the woman lie or, if not lie, not know how old her child is?”

Mr. Eli said nothing.

“Have you nothing to say? Perhaps I need to talk to Mr. Stirk. He may know of someone who could examine the boy and find out what is going on. If nothing else, clean him up and give him some clothes to wear.”

Mr. Eli sighed. “You are right. I apologize. I was shocked and surprised. Smith is a difficult individual and I’m imagining how to deal with him over this. He will be angry and tell me to mind my own business.”

“Is he indentured to you? If so, you have the right to do whatever you want. Child cruelty is an offence. He and or his wife could be in serious trouble. So could you be if you knowingly allow it to continue. Anyway, enough. This is not what I came for. Thank you for your hospitality, I must continue to discuss the tobacco harvest with the other local farmers. Good day to you. I will talk to Stirk. It is in your interest to talk to him first.”

David stopped. The look on my face, the tension in my body was palpable.

“David, my God, poor James. I must go to him.”

“Isaac, wait. I know James has suffered these last two months or so and it will soon be over. We are well on the way to saving him. Argie has the means to extract him without us being tangled up in the political infighting going on with the Governor, Tucker, Stirk and who knows who else.”

I nodded. Cold, with suppressed fury, I told David that we needed to come up with a plan and I had to talk to Argie Trescothick. David agreed.

“I told Argie that I would probably be in Sandys in the morning and to meet me at the Somerset Bridge. I will find someone to take

me there. As Tremaine, I am free to travel. I will do some investigation of my own and I will come back with him to meet with you.”

I did not sleep that night until the early hours. James and his tortured, brave little face swirling round my head. I woke and clutched at the image of Annie. She came, dear sweet Annie, calm and understanding, giving me strength with her love. The following morning, Sunday, David had gone. He had his own unique ways of obtaining what he needed and achieving his objectives. I could only wait.

I left the boatyard, went to the service at St. Peter’s. Afterwards, I strolled the length of St. George’s Island. Surreptitiously, I found someone to ferry me over to the other islands that surrounded the harbor. I visited the forts, was welcomed and shown around with great pride. I was impressed with the quality and quantity of cannon. Bermuda was well defended. By evening I was back at the boatyard, anxious and frustrated. My minders unaware of my absence. I felt I was barely in control, wanting David back and an action in place to rescue James. I was left well alone, J.B. and Obi keeping everyone away. Bradley fed me whenever I was able to stomach something.

It wasn’t until late the next day, James’ birthday, that David appeared. Back in his cabin on *Swallow*, Bradley had a decanter of wine and two glasses ready, hoping for a celebration, hope belied by David’s long face. I waited impatiently for his report.

“Isaac, sorry I am so late. When I met up with Argie, he told me that James had disappeared.”

“What? Where did he go? What happened?”

“Hear me out, please. No interruptions.”

I clenched my teeth and nodded. I sat stiffly with arms folded, my eyes fixed on David.

“Isaac, I managed to find someone at the yard who had a shallop. He agreed to take me and we sailed to the Great Sound and across to Sandys Narrow and under the Somerset Bridge into Mr. Eli’s harbor. Argie was waiting for us. He told me that he intended to return to the Smith hut and suggested that I go as a government representative from St. George’s, concerned about the welfare of the settlers. When



the woman saw us she became nervous. Argie told him why we were there and asked her to produce Peter. At which point, she burst into tears and through her sobs said that Peter had run away. It happened after Argie and Mr. Eli had been to see them yesterday. She had been angry with the boy, had struck him and sent him into the hut. Later, when she went in, he wasn't there. He had forced his way through the back of the hut, pushing aside the palmetto thatch. She showed us where. I asked about her husband. She said he was off the island and she had no idea when he would be back. He had given her orders to watch the boy and keep him out of sight. She was terrified and whimpered that he had a bad temper and beat her and the boy. She admitted her name was Dorothy, she was not actually married to him and Peter was not her son. She had been attracted enough to the man, whom she referred to as Sly, and was in a difficult situation in England. So his offer of a new start in Bermuda and the expectation they would be married was enough for her. Sly told her that Peter was his son by a previous marriage and he needed a mother. On the voyage, Peter was difficult and Sly treated him roughly and forced him to keep to himself. She felt sorry for the boy but was not allowed to talk to him. Other children on the boat tried to. Peter was brave and showed a great deal of resilience, but he could do nothing to avoid Sly's cruelty."

I exploded in fury, but David told me to wait.

He continued, "By the end of the interrogation, the woman was a wretched moaning heap. We ignored her and looked around. Behind the hut there was a track that meandered off into the thick vegetation. It joined another path which followed the boundaries of various fields and then disappeared into more heavy undergrowth, so heavy we had difficulty forcing our way through. James, if he had made his escape, could be anywhere. We needed a much more systematic search. Argie agreed to tell Eli and his laborers to come and help find James. Meanwhile, I forced my way through the undergrowth, calling for James and Peter. No response. At one point, I had the sense that I was being watched but found nothing. Argie returned with Eli

and his laborers, who made a thorough, fruitless search. We agreed that a small boy would not have been able to evade or be overlooked by the search party. Isaac, I am sure that James ran away. I believe he is being sheltered or held captive somewhere close by.”

I sat, hardly breathing, imagining what James might have done and where he was. I had an almost irrepressible pride in his spirit and bravery. He had not been cowed by his treatment, but seen an opportunity and taken it and now we had to find him. I left David to walk the beach. I needed time alone to deal with this news. It was a clear, warm night and I eventually slept for an hour or two under the stars.

Later, I left a message for Anthony. He was at his boat pre-dawn, 7 December. I apologized for contacting him at great risk to himself, but I was in desperate need of some advice. I told him the real reason for my being in Bermuda, where we were in our search for James and that we had hit a wall. Anthony sat listening to my story without comment or reaction. When I had finished he got up and looked out to sea still like a statue. After an age he turned and said, simply, “Come, we go to Somerset.”

No time to advise David, I hopped into Anthony’s boat and we sailed. We beached the boat close by Somerset Bridge. We walked up a path through tangled undergrowth, connecting to other paths. Anthony knew the way, I was quickly lost in the maze but we were heading up hill and generally north. On a high bluff looking out over the Great Sound I was told to stay where I was while Anthony went ahead. He said he might be some time. Argie and the search team had searched east of the bridge, no wonder they hadn’t found him. I waited with increasing impatience. James was so close. Eventually, Anthony returned with a man who was introduced to me as Ezra Garcia. He said that Anthony had explained why I was there.

“Mr. Tattershall, my family recently became aware of this white family, Smith. They are new. Mr. Smith is not a good man. His lady is treated badly and his son is treated badly by both of them. My children have attempted to make contact with the boy but they were chased away. Now, Anthony tells me that the boy is not their son,

but yours. How do I know that? The boy has been badly mistreated. Is that the way white people treat their children? We do not understand how it is possible.”

I was taken aback at Ezra’s restrained anger and the compassion shown for James. I began talking about my feelings and the search from the moment I learned that James had disappeared. I talked for a long time. I described James, the image of his late mother, his bravery. How proud I was of him. All my suppressed emotions flowed out. It was too much for me. I sat, head in hands, and wept. I felt a hand on my shoulder and a squeeze. I dried my eyes on my sleeve, a little boy again, looked up and gazed into Ezra’s face full of understanding. I apologized.

“You white people. So frightened of showing emotion. You needed to let it out and you have.”

Anthony, in the background, nodded in agreement. Ezra continued, “We have an issue. I am happy to tell you that we are caring for your son. He has been damaged, both his mind and body. He is being brought back to health by our healer.”

He saw my joy and raised a hand to stop me reacting.

“As I said, we have an issue. I have talked to the boy, James you say. He is confused. He has been told repeatedly that his real father abandoned him and is now dead. He knows his mother would never abandon him but she has gone. His new father and mother do not like him and he hates them. He has escaped on his own and is now safe but doesn’t know it, he feels it is his fault that all this happened to him. He needs time and healing.”

I couldn’t contain myself.

“I must go to him! He will recognize me. I will explain everything.”

“Mr. Tattershall, when someone has been starved of food and drink, you know they must be fed and watered slowly. Their body must learn to absorb again. The same is for someone, especially a small, lost and lonely boy, who has been told untruths and been persuaded they are true. He must be taught slowly that what he thought was true is false and be re-introduced to what he thought had gone.

He believes you are dead and, as I said, somehow he thinks it is his fault. He needs to be convinced that you are alive before we shock him with your sudden re-appearance. For the last several months he has been starved of attention, let alone love. He has built a protective shell round himself. We must break through that shell by surrounding him with love and children to play with.”

Anthony came and sat beside me. “Listen to Ezra. He is a wise man. When the time is right in a few days I will bring you back for your first meeting with your son, but you must trust him and his people. Your son is in good hands.”

“What about the search for James?”

Ezra smiled.

“They will not find anything. Perhaps you should go back and tell no one what you know. They will stop looking. In secret you and your son can become one again without any disturbance.”

“Thank you for your help. I will do as you say.”

As Anthony and I returned to the boat, I did not look back. I was torn but my head won over my heart—it was the right thing to do. I said little on our journey back, Anthony leaving me to my thoughts. He dropped me off in a deserted inlet and I walked back across Coney Island Bridge to the boatyard late in the afternoon. Clod was fit to be tied.

“Where have you been?”

“I went for a long walk.”

“I didn’t see you.”

“I didn’t want to be seen. I have a lot on my mind.”

“It is only because of your silly games in the past that I did not report you to the marshal.”

“That would have been foolish of you. A false alarm. You know I always turn up in the end.”

Clod was not happy but obviously relieved. He went away grumbling. David, meantime waited in the background till Clod had left.

— CHAPTER 28 —

I told David everything and he agreed with what Ezra had advised. Now we waited. The next day, David received a note from Argie saying he wanted to meet to discuss the situation the following day, 9 December. When David returned, he said he felt bad for Argie, who had described his search which had found nothing. Eli had pulled his people off the search while Argie continued when he could but realized it was pointless, upset and worried about the lost boy. David had acted concerned, thanked Argie for all his efforts and said he would report back to me to decide what the next steps should be and we would be contacting him in the near future. I received a note from Hallet to meet in his tavern that evening. Plod had been distracted by one of the crew, dressed in my clothes and hat, standing on the foredeck of *Swallow* and then going below.

Hallet was seated at a table when I arrived. I joined him. Without any preamble he asked, “How is your search going?”

“Not well.”

He nodded. “I hear the boy has gone missing.”

“Yes. I am worried. I feel like a captive not being able to search for James myself.”

Hallet looked at me, thoughtfully.

“It seems Captain Tucker is confined to his bed and is unwell. He is barely aware of what goes on round him.”

I waited for Hallet to continue. He smiled.

“Governor Woodhouse has been told of the situation. He has been

persuaded, given the changed circumstances, to permit you to search for your son.”

I started to thank him but he held up his hand to interrupt me.

“He has been further advised that you are not what you seem. You are a successful West Country businessman with many important and high-ranking friends. I am pleased that the Governor has graciously permitted you the freedom of Bermuda to continue the search.”

“Mr. Hallet, I can’t tell you how grateful I am for what you’ve done. One further thing—might I continue to make use of Anthony to be my guide and provide my transport?”

“He has already been advised to help you on any basis.”

It was a good meeting. Mr. Hallet toasted me on the hopeful, safe return of my son and we parted. Walking back through the night I had the impression that Mr. Hallet knew more than he was prepared to admit and I was comforted that I had allies in useful places. The next few days were torture. It took all my resolve not to badger Anthony for information or to go to Somerset.

I was distracted by the repairs to *Swallow*, at least, her successful hauling above the waterline. There were moments, as she was inched up the ramp by the crew at the capstan, when disaster threatened. A cradle support began to buckle, which was repaired, a spar roller broke under the keel and the fore end of the keel dropped to the ramp which splintered under the weight, taking a day to repair. There was considerable excitement when *Swallow* was pulled clear of the water. I had a long letter from Argie. Failing to find James and with Tucker’s indisposition he had been exploring Tucker’s connections with Mr. Eli. It turned out Eli’s harbor was a base for smuggling. Rum was being brought in, as well as other items, avoiding Government duty. Smith had been brought over to support the landing, storage, and distribution of the contraband. Argie had had an unhappy meeting with Smith, who had been arrested for serious injuries to Dorothy, his presumed wife, and Eli had washed his hands of him. His anger at the escape of James had turned to serious concern about his own future. Dorothy had turned King’s evidence and told her story. Everything

had been documented and been prepared for the Governor's attention. Unfortunately, Governor Woodhouse, concerned about Tucker's involvement, didn't want to deal with it. There was nowhere outside St. George's to hold Smith securely so he was let go and watched closely. He was not allowed to communicate with anyone. Dorothy had been taken away to St. George's, where she was being cared for by a family. So Smith remained at his hut, drinking and bitter. I wondered what Hook was up to. He must be directly involved with the smuggling. No mention had been made of him by anyone.

It was early Monday, 13 December when I was contacted by Anthony. He suggested we sail back to Eli's harbor. David wished me well and I left with Anthony. We were back at the bridge by midday and a little later met with Ezra. He sat me down under the shade of a large palmetto and brought me a cup of water to drink. Settling down beside me he explained how they had been working with James to bring him back from the hell he had been through. He was brave, intelligent, and a naturally strong boy. His physical wounds were treated and healing well, nothing serious, mostly bruising. However, he was confused and had been given all the time he wanted to play with the other children. At first he had been cautious but the friendliness of the children had enticed him to join in. At meal times he was prompted gently for information. Did he remember his family back in England? He said he missed his mother and wanted desperately to be back with her. He described his life back in Plymouth and the people he knew, taking a delight in talking about his baby sister. It had only been three months but so much had happened that his past life had become blocked from his memory. Now it was back. The one problem was me. For some reason James was convinced that I had abandoned him. In his mind he thought me dead. He had been asked to describe how he came to be with the Smiths. He didn't want to talk about it, his mind blocking the horror of it to protect himself. He was told that I wasn't dead, but still preferred to think me gone, simpler for him to deal with. With great care, they continued to chip away at that block. The healer had given him an herbal

drink that had calmed him and relaxed his mind. He had been asked to describe his father and, slowly, James opened up. He acknowledged that I had been a kind and loving father but not at home often. Eventually, he admitted to missing me like he missed his mother. It was then that Ezra decided it was time for me to meet my son. He said that James would be playing with the other children back at the village. It would be best if I accompanied Ezra, casually return to the village and watch the children. James should be free to notice me and respond accordingly. I should take care to react appropriately. I thought, did I have the strength?

We walked back to the village. I was tense but outwardly calm, Ezra smiling his encouragement. We came to the village where children were playing, happy and noisy, laughter and shrieks. We sat in shade and watched. James, the only white child, grown taller since I last saw him, was engrossed in the games. One or two of the children noticed us watching. Ezra was a beloved figure. They acknowledged him with a wave, and looked at me, curious, but went back to their games. I couldn't take my eyes off my son. My tension was gone, and I felt myself in some kind of rapture, as if my heart would burst. There was James, seemingly none the worse for wear. One child nudged James, who looked across but didn't recognize me. I casually took my hat off. Startled, he took a step or two towards me and stopped. Two of his friends came up to him and tried pulling him back to the game they were playing. He started back with them but kept his eyes on me. He half raised his hand in greeting and I did likewise. He stopped, turned and stared at me, a frown masking his face. I stood and walked to him, knelt beside him, put my hands on his shoulders, and quietly said, "Hello, James."

He said nothing, just looking at me. Then he smiled.

"Hello, Daddy."

We hugged. With his arms tightly around my neck he buried his head in my shoulder and sobbed. I whispered to him, "James, I love you. A bad man stole you from us. I have been looking for you ever since. Now, I have found you."



The children who had circled us watched and waited. James looked up at them and one of the children reached out to him pulling him gently back into their circle. I stepped away and watched as the artless magic of the natural child soothed the troubled spirits of my son. They all returned to their playing, and Ezra and I sat watching them. No words were spoken; none were needed, a joy to be able to have James close by. After a while, Ezra suggested we take a stroll to follow the children as their playing scattered them further afield.

Some time later James approached with several of the children. Ezra shooed away the others and pointed to the tree we had been sitting under watching them. James led me there, hand in hand. We sat while James told me of the fun he had the last few days. He asked me about Annie, Abigail, and Jeannie. I told him they were all well and couldn't wait to have him back with them. He asked when that would be. Soon, I assured him. *Swallow* was being repaired as a result of an accident, after which we would be sailing to America and then back to England. He was excited at the thought of the journey. Obviously, the voyage over had not made him fearful of the sea. We avoided talking about the bad times. Ezra advised me to let James broach the subject when he had a mind to. After a while, James wanted to go back to play with his friends, first making me promise that I wouldn't leave him.

Ezra came back with Anthony to discuss next steps. James seemed happy and safe where he was. Ezra felt it would take time and careful handling before he was free of the devils in his mind. He thought the improvement he had just seen was a good sign, but I should not expect miracles, James still needed care and attention. I said I was eternally grateful for what Ezra and his people had done and continued to do for my son. Ezra was gracious but was concerned that James should return to his own kind, saying, sadly, that that was the way of the world. Seeing the power of their healing balm, I felt that he needed to be with children his own age and the boatyard was not the place for him to be. We agreed that he should stay where he was for the next few days while I worked out a solution.

James and I spent more time together. I described my adventures in looking for him. Slowly, he started to tell me what had happened to him. He showed me the paths, fields, and beaches where he had been playing. It was idyllic. I explained that I needed to go back to St. George's to check on the state of *Swallow* and that he should stay with his friends. I would be back the next day. He seemed happy at that and ran off waving me goodbye. Anthony and I walked back along the main road towards the bridge. We passed a sheltered bay, almost entirely enclosed, to the south, which Anthony said was part of what I had come to call Eli's harbor. The road rose over a hill and then down to run along an inlet, with high ground on either side, also part of the harbor. There were huts and a wharf. I asked Anthony about them. He shrugged. Rumors abounded that vessels occasionally came there in secret and didn't stay long. Smugglers? I asked. Anthony shook his head. It was dangerous for black men to poke their noses into the affairs of white men. That was answer enough.

Back at the bridge I told Anthony I needed to find my friend Mr. Trescothick or at least get a message to him. He told me to give him the message and he would find someone to deliver it. Having no paper, I just said, "Tell him Isaac Stanfield needs to see him at the boatyard in St. George's as soon as possible."

Anthony repeated the message and disappeared up the road east of the bridge. He was gone for perhaps half an hour. He said that the message would be delivered and we walked along the shoreline to where Anthony's boat had been beached. Back once more at the boatyard, David congratulated me on finding James. Word quickly spread. J.B. and Obi, followed by the whole crew, came to shake my hand, wishing me well. I was touched and thanked them all. I told David that I had asked Argie to come to the boatyard. It was probable that there were English families with children on the Tucker estate or close by and I felt I should spend time there with James to help in the healing process. It would further strengthen our relationship, as well as keep James away from the mess and dangers of the boatyard. He would be with children of his age, hopefully. David responded.

“You have something else in mind, as well?”

“Yes, I believe Hook comes to Bermuda. How else would Tucker know him? I’m sure that Sly was sent here to be his man on the island to deal with the smuggled merchandise. Sly might even have been given the task of exploring local interests in establishing a more substantial base on the island for privateers or even piracy. I can keep a watch for Hook.”

David raised an eyebrow.

“Why? What would you do if you met Hook? Of what concern is it to you that he is a smuggler? You need to keep your head down, make sure *Swallow* is repaired as soon as possible so we can all, including James, return safely to England.”

“I have a deep, abiding anger at what Sly did to my son. Hook, I’m not so sure about. I believe he was involved in the plan to kidnap James. Regardless, he and Sly are tied together. Until *Swallow* is ready to sail, I will do all I can to see them punished.”

“Be careful of unintended consequences. Vengeance is mine sayeth the Lord.”

“There is something particularly disturbing about what Sly did. The Governor won’t touch it. I want to make sure he is forced to deal with it.”

David sighed. “We will work together on it. If for no other reason, I will try to keep you out of trouble.”

I wanted to write and tell Annie all that had happened. It made little sense as there were no boats due to leave Bermuda for England before January, by which time I hoped *Swallow* would be set to leave. If there had been I would have returned on the boat with James, leaving David to sail *Swallow* back later. Instead, I wrote in my journal.

Next morning, Argie appeared. We hadn’t seen each other for 10 years. He didn’t recognize me. I was only 15 then, no reason that he should. He had thickened and greyed in those years but I knew him. David introduced us and he was quick to offer his condolences on James’ disappearance.

“Argie, come on board *Swallow* to David’s cabin. We need to talk.”

He followed us up a ladder. The noise of hammering and sawing notwithstanding, we settled in and I told him that we had found James. A black family had found him and taken him back to Somerset Island to take care of him, which they have been doing well. He was delighted and, leaping to his feet, shook my hand. He said he had become increasingly desperate in his search, fearing the worst. He sat down again.

“Which family?”

“The head of the family is a man called Ezra. Do you know him?”

“I’ve heard of him. He was brought over from Santiago. He is a sugar cane farmer, although there is not much sugar cane being grown in Somerset. He is a competent farmer and a free man. I have never met him but he has a good reputation among his people, in fact, he is revered, I’m told.”

“I can understand that. I am most impressed and incredibly grateful for all he has done. However, he has suggested, strongly, that James should be among his own kind. I was surprised.”

Argie nodded. “He’s right. Ezra has a fine reputation but he is black. The white authorities are increasingly subjugating the blacks. When they object, they are treated even worse. The least fortunate steal to feed their families. Such acts are treated harshly, which causes more bitterness. The authorities and many of the settlers have created a cycle of despair among them. I have talked to Tucker, who has slaves. He sees the logic of treating them fairly, even giving them their freedom, but won’t do it alone. Now he’s too sick to care. I do what I can. The slaves on the estate are treated well and provided with all the basics. But they aren’t free.” He sighed and continued, “As for James, the authorities would react negatively if they found a white boy was living with a black family, no matter the circumstances. He needs to be moved before they find out, otherwise, Ezra and his family will be in serious trouble. He might even lose his freedom.”

I now understood Ezra’s surprising remark to me. David took up the conversation.

“James is still recovering. It seems the best place for him to be is among children of his own age. He is getting better but he still needs care and attention. Bringing him back to the boatyard is not an ideal solution, it’s a noisy and dangerous place and there’s no one here equipped to look after him.”

Argie laughed. “Not a problem. He can come and stay with my family. My wife Mary would be delighted to care for him. We have three children, aged 8, 5, and 4.”

I thanked him and asked whether there was a hut that I could use. I wanted to spend as much time as possible with James while in Bermuda.

“Of course. Better than a hut, I will introduce you to our ailing former Governor as an important investor from Plymouth. He has several unused bedrooms. Frobisher would be delighted to have someone hale and hearty to look after. If that doesn’t work, we can always find a place for you.”

With that settled, I agreed to take James to Argie the following morning. He said the best way was to sail. It would reduce the walk and James would probably enjoy the experience. Argie disappeared whence he had come. Next morning, early, Anthony was waiting for me. We returned to Somerset, wind blowing from the north, sea lumpy, it was cloudy and cold. He left me at the bridge and told me he would be fishing in the shelter of some islands while I was ashore. I asked him how much time he could give me before we needed to return to St. George’s. He said perhaps two hours. With the weather conditions he didn’t want to risk sailing after dark. James ran to meet me when I arrived. It had started to rain. James was well wrapped up and I had my foul weather gear. We walked and talked, climbing up to the top of the bluff. We sat under a tree looking out over the Great Sound. Fishing boats dotted the water and through the rain squalls I pointed them out to James. One of them we would be sailing in tomorrow. He was excited at the thought and then asked why. I told him that we were going to stay with a family a little way up the coast.

“We, Daddy?”

“Yes James, you and I are going to stay with a friend of mine while *Swallow* is being repaired.”

“Why can’t we stay with Uncle Ezra?”

Good question, I thought, sadly.

“I was invited to stay with the Trescothick family. They have three children about your age. Wouldn’t you like to come? They said they would very much like to have you.”

“Yes.”

The two hours passed quickly. I told James I had to hurry back to St. George’s to collect everything I needed for our stay at the Trescothicks and I would see him in the morning. We hugged and I left him with his friends at the village. I asked Ezra to walk with me back to the bridge and explained the situation. He nodded and said it was for the best, sad as he and his family would be to see James go, he was well-liked, a good boy and hoped he would be protected from the antagonism so many whites had towards the blacks. I promised him I would do whatever I could to ensure he treated everyone equally. Ezra smiled but doubted my efforts would succeed. I said I believed skin color was irrelevant, having had much experience with the Indians in North America, many of whom were my friends. Ezra looked at me skeptically.

“I hear you English treat them the same way you treat us.”

I sighed and agreed. I said I owed him so much and asked how I could recompense him. He said that what he wanted I was unable to give him, but he treasured my friendship. We shook hands. He looked hard and deeply into my eyes while he held my hand, smiled sadly and let me go. I told him we would be staying a short distance away and I hoped to see him again, soon.

Back to St. George’s, a wild and worrying sail in the gathering darkness. I told Anthony I would be moving James in the morning and would be staying on the Tucker property in the Overplus. I understood there was a place where he could drop us off. He said there was, close to where he had left me the first day behind the Brother Islands. He expected it to be a better day tomorrow for James’ first

ride. I asked him how I might show my gratitude to Ezra and his family in some tangible way. He thought a while.

“A fishing boat, small enough for the children to play in and large enough for them to learn to fish with adults. Oars and a small mast with a sail so they can learn to sail, as well.”

What a splendid idea. When I returned to the yard I went to see Mr. Jacobson and told him what I wanted. He said he would provide the boat for me in the next few days. I asked him to let Anthony know so he could deliver it. He added the price to my account. I still had to discuss with him who was responsible for the damage to *Swallow*. As it stood, much of the repairs were being done by *Swallow*'s crew. I told David that as soon as James and I were settled with Argie and had a chance to get my bearings with respect to what might be going on in Eli's harbor I would send word to him. I said I could arrange for Anthony to be available to transport him but he preferred to be independent. There was a small sailing boat that Mr. Jacobson had offered him, a Bermuda design, a small version of *Swallow*, except with no gaff and a triangular sail that extended to the top of the mast. He was keen to sail it and learn its characteristics.

Next morning, 15 December, we sailed back to Somerset. Anthony was right, it was a clear, bright day, a gentle breeze from the South, the dappled sunlight reflecting off the water. I was dazzled by the dark green coastline with sandy beaches that appeared almost pink in color, the different blues and light greens of the sea with the darker shadows of shoals and reefs under the water, the hogfish and rockfish abounding with many others, some larger, many smaller, as we skirted them. I took a bundle of my clothes, together with my sword and a brace of pistols. I didn't know what situations might arise and I needed to be prepared. I was concerned about clothing for James, who had been given some clothes while with Ezra's family. I planned to talk to Mrs. Trescothick about that, who would be an important contributor to the boy's full recovery. He needed to relearn the security provided by a good mother. I told Anthony that Mr. Jacobson would let him know when the fishing boat was ready.

Anthony was pleased, he would tow it to Somerset behind his boat and teach the children how to use and fish from it. Tobacco was the currency used to buy everything. I gave him a large bundle in a sack with my gratitude for his help. He was appreciative.

James had seen our approach from a lookout spot, and was waiting for me with two friends when I arrived. He had said goodbye already in anticipation. Ezra said he had gone to everyone in the family, shaken their hands and said thank you with a little bow. It was most touching. He now bade farewell to his two closest friends, a girl and a boy. The girl hugged him with tears running down her cheeks, the boy just smiled a sad little smile. I promised that I would bring James back for a visit soon. I made no mention of the boat I was giving them, it would be a surprise and all the more difficult to refuse when Anthony delivered it. We returned to Anthony and were quickly on the water. James was delighted and sat with Anthony at the tiller helping to steer. We spent an hour sailing round the islands in the Sound. Anthony explained how the sails should be set to take maximum advantage of the wind. He had a thin piece of ribbon on each shroud on either side of the boat that supported the mast. He asked James what he thought they were for. James tried to puzzle it out, studying the ribbons fluttering in the breeze.

Anthony said, "Watch what happens when I turn the boat." As he changed direction, the windward ribbon changed. James caught on.

"It is being blown by the wind. It tells us where the wind is blowing from."

Anthony brought the boat directly into wind. "Watch the ribbon, James."

He slowly eased the tiller and the boat fell away. The ribbon moved to point at the shaking sail. He told me to pull on the mainsheet. The sail filled, the boat heeled and off we went again. He asked, "James, what did you see?"

"I saw where the wind came from and how Daddy pulled the rope to move the sail to the right position for the wind."

"Good boy."



James was entranced. With help from Anthony, he steered with fierce concentration, tip of his tongue showing at the side of his mouth. He learned quickly that he had to push the tiller to the right if he wanted the boat to go left and pull left if he wanted it to go right.

“Don’t hold the tiller so hard. You must feel the motion of the boat and the effect of the wind and waves.”

The lesson was a good one, Anthony a patient and excellent teacher. We eventually headed back to the Brother Islands where he left us and our belongings on the beach. He said he would be happy to sail with us whenever we wanted, even to continue to teach James. As he sailed away, James stood at the water’s edge and waved till the boat disappeared behind the islands.

We had a good walk ahead of us. Argie had told us to find a path from the coast going south. Follow it to the main road, which was in a wide valley, filled with tobacco, maize, and wheat fields. We should turn left on the road and we would come to a wide path on our right which quickly became an avenue, follow it up the side of the valley to a crest, where we would be close to Tucker’s mansion. Someone would take us to his house. James hopped and skipped with excitement, telling me the names of the birds and the flowers as we passed, as he had learned from his friends. The days we spent together seemed to have healed much of the mental scarring he had suffered. I heeded Ezra’s warning that, despite signs to the contrary, James was a damaged boy. But I was with him now and he was happy. A laborer stopped us and was pleased to show us the way to the Trescothicks. Argie was not there, but Mary Trescothick was, with her three children gathered around her. She was most welcoming. James was soon away playing with his new friends.

— CHAPTER 29 —

Mary took me to the mansion, where Mr. Frobisher had been expecting me. Captain Tucker was in his library and was well enough to meet this important investor from England and I had prepared a credible story for him. The former governor was as David had described, enfeebled where once he had been a substantial man. He had anger and grievance etched into his face, around his eyes and his forehead, which was heavily lined. Balding with a straggly beard, he looked unwell, hunched into his seat. He had a blanket around him, though sitting in front of a roaring fire.

“You are Stanfield? Do I know you?”

“Yes sir, I am he. No, we have never met. I have recently come to Bermuda. I am a ship owner and business partner of Sir Ferdinando Gorges.”

“Ah, I know of him. Are you a West Country man?”

“Yes, sir. Born and bred in Dorchester, now resident in Plymouth.”

“I’m a Kentish man, myself. Born in Milton, by Gravesend on the Thames.”

He started coughing which sounded desperate, as if he was fighting for breath. Frobisher, who had been standing by the door, came forward and gave him some sharp blows on the back which seemed to do the trick. He reached for his medicine glass. David was right—a cloud of brandy fumes surrounded Captain Tucker. He sank back into his chair with his eyes closed. I waited.

“So, what can I do for you?”

“Well, sir. There is conversation in England among some of the investors that have land in the Southampton and Sandys tribes that they might be willing to sell their shares.”

“Which investors?”

“I’m sorry, sir. I am not at liberty to say. I have come to Bermuda to determine whether I and some of my business associates should make that investment.”

He made a dismissive noise which turned into another coughing fit. Frobisher worked his magic again and turned to me with an expression that I interpreted as meaning Captain Tucker should be allowed to rest. I nodded, then Tucker spoke.

“I understand you are to stay here. Don’t know how that happened. A man can’t decide who his guests might be. Anyway, Frobisher will look after you. Now, leave. I am to be put back to bed.”

He waved his hand dismissively and Frobisher ushered me out. I told him I was to meet with the Trescothicks at their house and would return later. I had a room, at least, even if my host was decidedly uninviting. I hoped that in his more lucid moments I would have an opportunity to talk to him to see if I could winkle out of him what he was up to with Hook. I wanted to enlist Ezra to keep watch and let me know if any strange boats appeared in Mr. Eli’s harbor.

James was with the three children, Sue, Charlie, and Sam, eating a meal at the kitchen table, provided by Mary, who admonished as necessary. The eldest child, Sue, had taken an affectionate, proprietorial interest in James, who seemed to enjoy the close attention from an elder sister he had never experienced before. All to the good, I thought. Argie was sitting in a high-backed chair by the kitchen range and rose to meet me.

“Isaac. Good to see you. Welcome to our home. As you can see James is well set.”

I laughed and James looked up. He waved and went back to his food and conversation. Argie suggested we go for a walk to show me the estate, giving us the chance to talk. He asked me what my plans were.

“Argie, my number one priority is to make sure James is back to full health. Ezra tells me that James is still recovering, needing care and attention. I do hope Mary can help teach what it is like to have a loving mother back in his life.”

Argie said that he thought Sue might be a useful ally, by the looks of things.

I went on, “The second priority is to have *Swallow* ready to sail as soon as possible. Unfortunately, that is out of my hands. The boatyard isn’t the most efficient. Another thing I want to do is find out what the connection is between Tucker, the man Hook I had a confrontation with in England and Sly Smith, the man who kidnapped James. He must be made to pay for the torture he inflicted on a small, defenseless child. By the way, where did Sly disappear to?”

“What do you mean?”

“When we talked to Dorothy she said Sly had been off the island. How so? Where did he board a boat and what boat?”

Argie suggested someone should have a heart to heart with Sly. He offered to do it as the local voice of authority, working as he did for Captain Tucker, to which I agreed. As far as Argie knew, Smith was still at his hut, a wretch with drink his only solace.

We talked about Tucker’s involvement and Argie said he would make discrete enquiries. I told him I was going to see Ezra tomorrow morning. I didn’t want him to take any risks but would ask his help in keeping us informed of any unusual boat arrivals in the harbor there. I felt certain that Hook made surreptitious visits to Bermuda which was how Tucker knew him. Argie said he could put pressure on William Eli as Smith lived on his property, but was hesitant to accuse him of involvement. He was a farmer, who worked hard. He had a good, fertile piece of land of which he was proud. Other than receiving some consideration for turning a blind eye to any smuggling enterprise, Argie doubted he was an active participant but he would find out.

James, tired but happy, was off to bed, shared with the others. I said goodnight to him and gave him a hug before he followed his

companions. Mary cooked us a fine meal after which I returned to the mansion. Frobisher was in the kitchen and we had a brandy together. Tucker was in bed asleep. It was an opportunity for Frobisher to relax and talk, nothing consequential, the mardling of a lonely man. I imagined that when we came to know each other better, he could be a mine of information. He showed me to my room by candlelight, clean and spacious, cedar wardrobe, chest of drawers, and washstand. My belongings had been put on my bed, including my sword in its scabbard. There was a piss pot under the bed to save me a trip to the outhouse. The bed itself was magnificent, a four poster, made of polished cedar with white bed linen. He left me with the candle and good wishes for a peaceful night.

Next morning, as dawn broke I dressed and went downstairs to the kitchen. A black lady introduced herself with a curtsy, Agatha, the cook, and I was given a fine breakfast of eggs and bread with a tankard of ale. Argie had been up awhile and left me a note he was going to talk to Sly and that Mary would be taking the children, including James, to the beach.

I slipped away to go and find Ezra. He was supervising a team of laborers in hoeing a field of vegetables, the red soil startling between the rows of green. He waved when he saw me and climbed up to meet me.

“How is James?”

“He has settled well. He is with a family with three children, the eldest, Susanna a girl of eight, is acting the dutiful mother. James is enjoying the attention.”

Ezra nodded in satisfaction. We sat and after pleasantries were exchanged I explained my main reason to see him. I was worried about the lack of resolution as to the circumstances why James was brought to Bermuda. Without understanding the causes and the motivations of the people concerned we would be hard pressed to protect James or others from future threats. Until the Governor was prepared to act, we could do little. But, if we built a compelling body of evidence while eliminating any possible political risk to Governor

Woodhouse, we would be able to get him to deal with the situation. Ezra looked doubtful, having a poor opinion of the authorities in St. George's.

"Isaac, what would you have me do?"

"Without you risking any trouble with the authorities, would it be possible to let me know whenever a strange boat comes to any of the harbors in Somerset? I understand that apart from the harbor here there are others including Mangrove Bay. There are coves and inlets on Gates and Ireland Islands, on the other side from the Great Sound."

I showed him the copy of the Norland map I always carried with me. He studied it.

"Eli's harbor is by far the best place to come secretly as it is well hidden. The other places would require a significant number of people to be a part of the secrecy, because those places are more exposed. It is possible to sail from the west through the reefs relatively secretly around Daniel's Head, keeping close to the shore and into the harbor here."

He showed me the routes on the map.

"I will pass the word to my people to let me know of any unusual movement of sea vessels. I will send you a note as soon as I hear."

I thanked him. It was as much as I could have asked for. We talked awhile longer before parting with my promise to bring James for a visit. Back with the Trescothicks. Argie hadn't returned but the children were just back from the beach. James, face glowing, eager to recount the adventures he had had. He showed me his bare feet, grains of sand stuck to his skin. He said the sand was soft and pink everywhere and he had been for a swim.

"Really, James, you're a swimmer?"

"Well, I paddled mostly. But the waves kept knocking me over so I had to swim. Sue stayed by me and she is teaching me to swim properly. Then there are caves and sand dunes and birds and it's wonderful."

Mary smiled and told James to come with her and the other

children to clean up and put on dry clothes before they caught a cold. James dutifully followed them into the house.

I returned to the mansion and met Frobisher, who told me, "Captain Tucker is in the library. He was asking about you. Do you have time to spend with him? He could do with some company."

When I went in Tucker was staring into the fire. He didn't look up when I entered.

"Put another log on the fire."

I did as he ordered and the crackle and sweet scent of the burning cedar made me hover over the fire.

He took a labored breath and said, "Nothing like it. The smell keeps me alive. I swear I came back to this God forsaken place because of that smell."

I turned and looked down at him. He laughed.

"I have the finest house in Bermuda. One day, this will be one of many. But now I am the envy of every man jack on the Somers Islands."

He coughed again.

"Still," he gasped, "I can't take it with me. I have sons and nephews. I will populate this island with them, if the ungrateful wretches see the sense of it."

I broke through the self-absorption of a dying old man.

"You know Hook. How?"

He squinted up at me, standing by the fire.

"Why would a business partner of Sir Ferdinando want to know about Hook? Ah, but he was a privateer in his youth, was he not? Weren't we all till King James put a stop to it."

"Does Hook come to the island?"

"He does. He brings the good things in life. Fine furniture, fine wine, good rum. The occasional slave."

"Does he work for you?"

"No, he's a bastard. He sells me what I want, which is little enough these days."

Tucker ruminated to himself awhile, muttering. I waited.

“He is a vicious angry man. He demands I buy his contraband. I don’t want it. He threatens me. He has employed a man to live here who threatens me.”

“Why? What in God’s name can he threaten you with?”

He ruminated some more.

“I was foolish a long time ago. Somehow he got to hear of this foolishness and he holds it over me. I would lose everything, including this house, if he were to open his mouth to the wrong people.”

“What does he want from you?”

“Protection to allow him to continue to smuggle contraband into the island. A means to dispose of that contraband.”

“How do you dispose of it?”

“I have someone who works for me. I have to pay Hook. My man has a regular client base.”

“Why are you telling me this?”

“You know Hook. There was a man here a short time ago who mentioned his name. He gave me some cock and bull story about looking for work. The two of you have a similar air about you. It’s too much of a coincidence that you both should know Hook. I think you both are after him.”

I was surprised. Beneath Tucker’s decrepit exterior there was an astute man. I said nothing.

“Also, he is due back here soon. I want done with him. I can’t inform the authorities here. Governor Woodhouse is an idiot and frightened of his own shadow. He knows something is going on. I’ve tried to make sure he worries that, whatever it is, it’s being sanctioned by important people in England, so he does nothing. He doesn’t want to put a foot wrong in case he puts it in the wrong mouth.”

I remained silent.

“Who do you represent, damn you?”

I walked over to the chair opposite him and sat down.

“I represent only myself. My interest in Hook is a personal one. But you and I share the same objective. We both want him stopped. When is he due back?”



“Some time in the next week. Christmas is a good time, he says, for the merchandise he brings to the island.”

I thought about what I had heard. This was going to be difficult. How to deal with the threat of exposure while closing down Hook’s business? My thoughts were interrupted by Tucker having another fit of coughing. I went to the door and called for Frobisher. He wasn’t far away. He told me to leave while he dealt with the old man. Frobisher must have overheard our conversation. I wondered, suddenly, whether he was Tucker’s agent dealing with this contraband. I needed to get a note to David to come here. I went to see if Argie had returned. He had and told me of his morning.

“What a nasty piece of work this Sly character is. He behaves like the cornered rat he is, all hiss and venom.”

“How did you deal with him?”

“Put the fear of God into him. Roughed him up a little and he calmed down soon enough, turning into a sniveling good-for-nothing.”

“What did you get out of him?”

“He admitted to kidnapping James and kept saying it was Annie’s fault. Who is Annie?”

“His cousin, my wife, James’ step-mother. He and his brother treated Annie badly. Annie dealt with them and they never forgave her.”

“He said something about her bastard husband killing his brother. Was that you?”

“Yes, his brother was an even worse villain than Sly. He was being held by the authorities and escaped. He captured me and was about to kill me when Annie rode to the rescue. It ended up him being delivered to the authorities. I think he was eventually hung for his crimes.”

Argie was shocked, his eyes wide. “Bloody hell. You have some woman for a wife.”

“That I do.”

Argie shook his head and continued.

“Sly was in trouble. He met up with Hook, who wanted someone

in Bermuda working for him. Hook arranged for Sly to travel incognito—all he had to do was find a family.”

I interrupted Argie. “Wait. That sounds like Hook had nothing directly to do with James’ kidnapping.”

Argie shrugged. “Once here, Sly was to await delivery of smuggled merchandise, and when it arrived, to deal with Captain Tucker’s steward. Apparently, Hook knows something about Tucker. Sly doesn’t know what it is but the threat of exposure is enough for Tucker to work with Hook. Seems Frobisher is the conduit for contraband being distributed throughout the island. Sly was to keep the pressure on Tucker, collect payment for the complete consignment, and otherwise act like an indentured servant. Eli has been persuaded to maintain that fiction.”

I said this matched what I had just heard from Tucker which surprised Argie. I told him that Tucker wants Hook dealt with as he isn’t prepared to continue living under the threat of exposure, but he can’t let Woodhouse handle it because of that threat. He obviously wants his estate to be free and clear of any issues when he dies, which he believes is fast approaching.

“By the way, when you saw Sly, did he tell you where he had gone and how he got back?”

“Sly insisted he hadn’t left Bermuda. He was off on an errand and refused to say what the errand was.”

Argie asked why Tucker brought up the subject of Hook with me.

“I asked him about Hook. David had mentioned Hook to him, apparently. He surmised that David and I were after Hook which was astute of him and sees us as being his possible salvation.”

Argie looked troubled. He said that Sly admitted that Hook was due soon with another delivery. Sly was scared about what would happen to him when Hook arrived. Hook and his crew are deemed ruthless and Sly is prepared to do anything to extract himself from his clutches.

“Isaac, this whole mess is way beyond our capability to deal with. We have to go to the authorities.”

“Argie, Tucker would rather continue to deal with Hook than have Woodhouse learn of his past foolishness, as he calls it. We could walk away from this and leave Sly to Hook’s tender mercies, solving my problem. But suppose Sly convinces Hook that you and I are a danger to his enterprise? I think that could be a likely option.”

“Jesus, Isaac. What have you done to me and my family?”

“Argie, I apologize beyond words for putting you in danger, an unintended consequence of James being kidnapped. Everything has come to this point. Before we do anything we need to get David here and plan how to deal with this.”

Argie said he spoke too hastily. He was pleased to have helped rescue James and wanted to continue to help. He owed his life to David and me. If there was any risk to his family, he would move them away from danger and shook my hand on that promise. A note was sent to David. We spent the rest of the day as an extended family and despite the Hook cloud hanging over us, it was a pleasure. James and Sue were now inseparable, much to her siblings’ delight, too much the bossy elder sister, now distracted away from them.

Later in the evening, over a glass of rum, Argie and I talked about the political situation in Bermuda. I was intrigued because from what I had seen, the Bermuda settlement seemed to be a model that P. should examine with respect to his ideas for New England. Argie said there was a real issue which prevented it being more successful than it was: That was the conflict between the interests of the absentee landlords who were the investors, and the farmers being the settlers. The Governor was appointed by the Somers Isles Company and, therefore, strove to represent its interests. However, the settlers needed to have their own representation. The Governor, in Argie’s opinion, should be appointed by the settlers and represent their interests back to the Somers Isles Company. As it is, individual farmers write to their landowners back in England complaining about anything and everything. With the many different factions among the farmers, there’s no consistent, representative voice. I asked about the new Assembly.

“That certainly helps, but it still leaves the Governor free to play the different factions against each other. It enables him to wield a big stick. He is the arm of the Company and can ignore or corrupt the legitimate complaints that are presented to him by the Assembly. So it is left to people like Tucker and other major tenants to take their complaints to their own landowners. We know that the Warwick, Smith, Sandys, and Southampton factions are at odds with each other, so the legitimate concerns of the people who live here, raising families and striving to build stable communities, are ignored.”

It was an interesting conversation. I reflected much on it and would continue to do so until I had a chance to discuss its implications with P. back in Dorchester. At that thought, a wave of homesickness threatened to drown me. I longed to take James home.

The 17th of December dawned cold and grey with rain in the air. With it came David after an adventurous sail in the half-light pre-dawn. He said he received my note late at night and was anxious to get here. He skirted the shoreline just outside the breakers. A bit hair-raising at times, especially around Spanish Point, but dawn rescued him from the shoals. He joined us for a good breakfast, cooked by Mary. After clearing up, Mary took the children away on an excursion, leaving Argie, David, and me to plan our next steps round the kitchen table.

## — CHAPTER 30 —

Whether we liked it or not, we had become embroiled in helping Tucker solve his smuggling problem with Hook.

Sly couldn't be trusted. While he ought to be present when Hook arrived to assure Hook all was well, Sly would be in a position to convince Hook we were a danger to his enterprise. Then Hook and his crew might attack us.

Suppose we killed or captured Hook? The threat to Tucker might still be there, known by someone else, allowing his successor to continue Hook's smuggling enterprise with Tucker.

We needed to know what the threat was. Tucker wouldn't tell us, for fear we'd use it against him ourselves. Perhaps Frobisher knew something. Would Tucker at least tell us if the threat would be inherited by his children on his death? And when would that be? A month, six months?

Even if we resolved the Hook – Tucker issue, it didn't resolve the Sly issue. If Sly escaped, irrespective of what happens to Hook, he would remain a threat to my family. Sly had to pay for what he did. Absent Hook, he would be found guilty of kidnapping and probably hanged by a Bermuda court. Taken back to England, especially given he was on the run from the law there, together with his kidnapping offense, it would result in the same thing.

We reviewed the list and debated our preferred course of action. Eventually we agreed that I would talk to Frobisher and then Tucker, as necessary. If, as we hoped, Hook would remain a threat only

as long as Tucker was alive, it would provide us with more flexibility how to deal with him. David and Argie agreed go and visit Sly. If Sly was made to be absent when Hook arrived, it should not be cause for immediate alarm.

I felt I had forgotten something important, something about Sly. I said as much to David and Argie. We went through the meetings Argie and David had at his house with Dorothy. That was it—Sly wasn't there. Why wasn't he? She said he was off island. What did she mean? Where did he go? Does he have an accomplice? David said he would find out when they went to get him. We decided to proceed straight away. We needed more information and we had to get Sly out of the way. We agreed that if at all possible I should avoid him, at least until Hook had been dealt with. I went to meet with Frobisher, while David and Argie went off to deal with Sly. Frobisher was in the kitchen by himself polishing silverware. I asked after Captain Tucker. He was having a nap. I asked him if he had overheard the conversation Tucker and I had had. He nodded.

“Are you the man Captain Tucker uses to deal with Hook?”

“Yes.”

“How do you feel about that?”

“I hate it, but I will do whatever Captain Tucker asks of me.”

“You know he wants to cease further involvement with Hook. I presume you know why he can't do that?”

“Yes.”

“Do you know what the threat is that Hook uses to coerce Captain Tucker?”

“No, not really. It has something to do with his past. Before he came to Bermuda.”

“Nothing to do with how he came to own this estate?”

“No, I don't believe so.”

I told him that I needed to know what it was so I could work out how to stop Hook. Frobisher shook his head.

“I have tried. He refuses to say one word about it.”

“Do you know whether the threat could transfer to his children

when he dies?"

"I don't know."

"I think I need to talk to him."

Frobisher said he was asleep in his chair in the library. He would go and see if he could be disturbed. A little later, I was sitting opposite a decidedly out of sorts, grumbling old man.

"What do you want? Why are you interrupting my sleep?"

"Captain Tucker, I am trying to work out a plan to remove Hook from your life. However, I need some information. What is the threat he holds over you?"

He sat looking at me. He settled back in his chair. He seemed to want to shrink into insignificance. I waited.

Eventually he muttered, "As far as I know he is the only person who has that information. Rather, he is the only one who knows where that information can be found."

"So if Hook dies, he might well have arranged for someone else to continue the threat."

"That is what I have always assumed."

"What happens when you die?"

He grunted. "That won't be long. What do you mean?"

"You told me in our last meeting that you did not want your successors to inherit any problems with respect to the estate."

"I said that?"

"I am summarizing what you said. Did I understand you right?"

"Right enough."

"Well?"

"You really are an impudent young man. I am entirely unused to being interrogated in this way."

I stopped him.

"Captain Tucker, I am trying to help you. To do so, you have to help me. I need to know whether Hook and or his associates are able to threaten your successors or this estate."

"Why?"

"I apologize for being so direct, but how long do you expect to live?"

Tucker laughed. “Mr. Stanfield. It has been rare that in my long life I have met anyone as brutally honest as you. I find you, at this terminal stage in my life, to be refreshing.”

I sat back, bowed my head and waited.

“My doctor says I have a mortal condition. I won’t bore you with the details. I was told some time ago that I will be dead within six months, possibly sooner. The threat that Hook hangs over me will have limited if any effect on my children. It has no effect on my estate here in Bermuda.”

“Forgive me, Captain Tucker, I thought you told me you were concerned not to leave problems for your children with respect to your estate here.”

“I was referring to my reputation. I want my children to be proud of what I have accomplished here.”

I thought through what I had heard. Tucker was looking tired and fidgeting. I had learned what I needed to know. I stood up and looked down at him, smiled, and gently shook my head. He was a tough old bird and he had a fearsome reputation. He held my gaze.

“Mr. Stanfield. I believe I suffer the loss of not having known you many years since. I enjoyed our conversation and your company. In what little time I have left I would appreciate another opportunity to talk with you, perhaps about more pleasant subjects. Now, please ask Frobisher to come to me.”

He waved me away. I bowed and left. Frobisher was waiting at the door and nodded to me as I passed him. I went to my room and made notes of my meeting, after which I sat looking out of the window over Tucker’s property. However he had manipulated Norwood and his surveys, what he had managed to keep, misusing the company’s manpower though he did, he had turned into a stately property. Succeeding generations would be grateful.

Through my reverie I heard Argie’s voice. Looking out of the window, I saw him talking to David. I went down to meet them. They greeted me with long faces.

“What happened?”



“Sly wasn’t there. We searched around and found nothing to indicate where he might have gone and why.”

I suggested that maybe he went looking for Dorothy after all. Would he have any idea where she might have gone? Argie said there was really only one place she could have gone and that is where she was taken—St. George’s to await for Governor Woodhouse to determine her fate. There again, he might be trying to escape Bermuda. The only place to find a suitable vessel would be St. George’s. Argie figured it wouldn’t be difficult to find him and David volunteered to return immediately to St. George’s to do so. I reminded them that Sly had disappeared before. Whither he went no one seems so know. That was one of the reasons we were trying to get hold of him. Might he have done the same thing this time?

I provided them both with the essential details of my meeting with Captain Tucker. Hook would cease to be a danger once Tucker was dead. How then do we contain or restrain Hook for that limited but undetermined time? Short of killing the man and risking an associate carrying out the threat, he either had to be persuaded that Bermuda wasn’t worth the effort, making Tucker’s involvement irrelevant, or he had to be captured and held secure in some way. We needed time to think through the possibilities. Unfortunately, we didn’t have much time to come up with viable alternatives. We needed all the resources we had ready for action.

David left for St. George’s promising to be as quick as he could and would delegate J.B. to use the crew to search for Sly. I kept thinking that Sly was the key. Unopposed, Hook would leave his contraband, collect his payment that Sly would extract from Frobisher, and sail away. I didn’t believe that there could be more visits by Hook during Tucker’s remaining few months of life, which meant this was probably the last. If this was understood, I would expect Hook to take Sly away with him. In which case, they would both get away scot-free. I was less interested in Hook, but if we could delay Sly in any way, Hook might leave without him. We had to find Sly. There was nothing more we could do until David returned, unless Hook appeared.

I spent the time with James. Anthony came to the house early one bright and calm morning and suggested James and I might like to go sailing with him. We walked to his boat, another smaller one tied to it. Anthony said it was destined for Ezra and his children. Would we like to accompany him to present the boat? His idea was to have Ezra and the children come down to Somerset Bridge where the boat would be handed over. I told him it was an excellent idea, but suggested James should make the presentation. James asked me what he should say.

“Whatever you like. You are giving the boat to them to thank them for looking after you so well.”

Ezra and the children filed down to the beach on Somerset Island, a little way west and around the corner from the bridge, accompanied by Anthony. As they approached, I moved away, leaving James by the boats, pulled up on the beach. I sat on a rock some distance away to enjoy it all. The children clustered round James with much excitement and merriment. Anthony asked them all to step back. They did so with Ezra in their midst. He then turned to James and said that James had something to say. They all focused on James. He stuttered for a moment. Glanced at Anthony and round at me. Then, with a huge smile on his face, he announced, “We have brought you a present. A kind of Christmas present, only it’s early. It is a thank you present for looking after me.”

He then beckoned the children to follow him as he marched them to their new boat. “This for you.”

James stepped back and the children stood in silence. Then one reached forward and touched the side, looked inside and clambered into the boat with a shout of glee. Immediately, the boat was full of young bodies. Ezra walked over to me.

“Isaac, I should not accept such a generous gift. But you organized it so there is no possible way I could refuse it from James in front of the children. I should be angry, but I’m not. I am delighted. It is a fine present and a keepsake for the children. We will name it James and paint it on the stern. Thank you.”

I told him that Anthony had volunteered to teach the children how to row and sail it. He said he would teach them how to fish from it. Ezra nodded.

“That would be good.”

Anthony’s original suggestion to take James and me sailing was overtaken by James wanting to spend time with his old friends. Soon Anthony was teaching them all about the boat, James as raptly interested as anyone. Ezra and I walked along the beach. Ezra was in short trousers and bare feet, wading in the water. He suggested I take my shoes and stockings off, roll up the legs of my breeches and do the same. The water was soft and deliciously cool. As we waded, I asked him if he had any ideas about Hook’s possible arrival. He said that he had been aware of strange goings on in Mr. Eli’s harbor in the past. It was white business so he stayed well clear of it, but at my suggestion, had arranged for a careful watch to be made of the entrance to the harbor from the south. Any arrival would be seen and he would notify me. Late in the afternoon, we said our farewells and Anthony sailed James and me back to the beach behind Brothers Islands. I thanked him for the most satisfying day and carried the sleepy James back to Argie’s house.

David did not return for two days—on 20 December, a blustery day. He was soaked through and his boat nearly waterlogged after a rough passage. He had a schoolboy grin from ear to ear, having enjoyed every minute. As for Sly, St. George’s had been scoured. No sign of him, there were few places he could go. He must have been advised the authorities were after him and Dorothy wanted nothing to do with him. Every bar and tavern had been visited and his description circulated—nothing. Where the hell was he?

Three days later, I was walking with James down to meet Anthony at our usual beach behind the Brothers Islands when we met up with a familiar figure. It was Sam, the boy I’d met when I first visited the area. I introduced him to James, who was polite. Smiling, I asked him, “Still seeing pirates, Sam?”

“Why yes. There is one in Mangrove Bay right now.”

“What?”

I was stunned. I thanked him and with James in tow hurried down to meet Anthony, who was waiting for us. I asked him if there was any way we could find shelter to hide in and have a good view over Mangrove Bay.

“Of course.”

We set sail across the Great Sound to a little inlet between Watford and Gates Islands, beached the boat, and climbed up through trees to look over Mangrove Bay. I whispered to James that this was an important game that required no noise and careful movement. James followed me as quiet as a mouse. Sure enough, there was a sloop, not dissimilar to *Swallow*, but smaller. There was a landing stage at the far end of the Bay, perhaps a quarter of a mile away. The sloop was moored and cargo was being unloaded. They were too far away for me to recognize anyone. Anthony said he had seen the boat previously, arriving in the dead of night, a couple of times a year, it unloaded cargo and was gone within a couple of days. If this was Hook, we needed to move quickly. It seemed that Sly might have given us the slip and had disappeared to prepare for a Mangrove Bay meeting the first time and to meet Hook this second time. Anthony sailed us back and we hurried to the Trescothicks. I left James with Mary and called to Argie and David to meet with me outside and told them what I had found.

Argie said, “This means Frobisher is about to be or has already been contacted. We need to find out.”

So saying, he went to the mansion, coming back a short time later. Frobisher was surprised and frightened. He admitted that Sly had been to introduce himself when he had first arrived, but since then no contact had been made. The first he ever knew about a shipment was when Hook was already on the island. There would be a visit late at night and they would be presented with a manifest of what had been unloaded and a total payment amount expected. Captain Tucker always had substantial ready funds kept in a safe. The amount was paid, the shipment delivered, and Hook disappeared.

The shipment was stored in a hut, where over a period of time it would be disbursed in small fishing boats to individual buyers. I speculated that from what I saw, someone, or perhaps more, would be visiting Frobisher that night.

We agreed to provide a welcome. One person would not be much of a problem, but Sly was new to the game and Hook would want make sure the transaction was handled correctly. Our objective was to capture them both. I told Argie that he should gather as many men as possible and have them watching all the entry points to the estate. Argie's men should be armed, remain hidden, and follow anyone passing them. The men would report to him what they found and he would then get a message to me. He suggested David and I wait in the library and Frobisher should invite Hook and/or Sly into the kitchen. When we emerged from the library to accost them, Argie would immobilize any support they might have brought. We all agreed the general plan and Argie left to organize his men. I went over to see Frobisher, who was concerned. He had not yet dared wake Captain Tucker and didn't know what to tell him. I said that we would be there in hiding. When the visitors appeared, he should take them to the kitchen and we would join them. I suggested that Captain Tucker should be left to sleep.

Nothing happened that night. Early next morning, 24 December, a message was delivered to Frobisher. He would receive a visit that night and payment, the same as previously, would be expected. I asked Frobisher what that payment was. He refused to say but he said there were sufficient funds available. We set up again that night. Around midnight, there was a knock on the front door. Frobisher went to answer it. David and I were listening in the library. There was a muttering of voices and footsteps down the hall. With the door opened a crack, I was able to see two figures following Frobisher to the kitchen. There was a gentle tap at the window, which we had left slightly open. It was Argie.

"Two men left outside. They have hidden in a storeroom near the front of the house."

“Can the hut be secured?”

“Yes,” said Argie with a grin.

“Right, go and close them in. David and I are going to the kitchen.”

Argie left. I slipped out the window and ran to the kitchen door at the back of the house. David gave me a count of 15 and left the library to walk down the hall to the kitchen. With sword in hand, I quietly entered the kitchen. The two men were standing with their backs to me, looking at the manifest spread on the table. David’s entry caused them to start back and reach for their weapons. I told them to hold fast. They turned, trapped. Frobisher moved smartly out of the way and picked up a large, heavy fire iron. At that moment there was an outcry from the front of the house, quickly subdued. David removed all their weapons. I suggested they sit and told them their two colleagues were now secured. Their hands were tied behind their backs to their chairs. It all happened too quickly for them to do more but curse.

The two men were Sly and Hook. I hadn’t met Sly before but there was a strong family likeness to his brother, Caleb. I looked down at them. To Sly I said, “You must be Seth.” He glared at me. I turned to Hook. “And you are Hook.”

He was altogether a different character from the person I remembered. No longer the lank haired, mean looking bastard. He was dressed comfortably and well, cool and collected even trussed up. I barely recognized him. He looked me up and down.

“I know you. Wait a minute, you were the idiot looking for your sister in Dartmouth. Damn, I knew I should have taken care of you then. However meek you seemed there was something still and threatening about you, but I was distracted. Who are you? What’s your interest here?”

“I’m Isaac Stanfield. The child Seth stole is my son.”

Hook nodded slowly and glowered at Seth. Seth tried to lunge at me but was prevented by his bindings, and spat out, “You killed my brother. You’re lucky I didn’t kill your boy in retaliation.”

“You’re a fool. Caleb tried to kill me and I returned him to the

bailiffs he was escaping from.”

Hook watched this interchange. “What has this family row got to do with me? I am here on legitimate business with Mr. Frobisher. Why don’t you take Sly or Seth away and leave me to do what I came to do.”

I stared at him. His self-confidence slipped slightly.

“So, you have us at a disadvantage. This has to be about more than your child. I assume you have found him and I imagine he’s no worse for the wear. Put it down to experience and if you want retribution, you have Seth. Leave me out of this.”

I told him, “We represent the interests of Captain Tucker. He doesn’t wish to continue his relationship with you. We are aware you have some sort of serious hold on him to force him to support your smuggling. He has reached the point where he no longer cares about your threat.”

Hook thought about that before responding,

“I find that difficult to believe. I would need him to tell me that directly.”

“Mr. Hook, you do not seem to understand the precariousness of your position. You have been caught smuggling. The manifest is here on the table. Governor Woodhouse would be delighted to get his hands on you. He is determined to rid Bermuda of all smugglers, privateers, and pirates. A public trial and a hanging would be a suitable deterrent to others.”

“Mr. Stanfield, why are you telling me this? If your sole interest is to hand me over to the Bermuda authorities, why not just do it? It sounds like you want something.”

I laughed. “It is for Captain Tucker to decide what he wants to do with you. Depending on his decision, we might have a further interest in you.”

I wanted the confrontation to end. I was worried about a possible attempt to rescue Hook and Seth by the remainder of his crew. Argie joined us at that moment.

“Argie, you have met Sly already. We know him as Seth. Please

remove him to join the two you already have secured. Come back as soon as you can. We have more work to do.”

I decided to secure Hook in the cellar of the mansion as I wanted him out of the way and available for Tucker in the morning.



## — CHAPTER 31 —

I was worried about a possible counterattack. It would have taken Hook an hour or more to get here, a round trip of at most four hours. We didn't know if Hook had worked out a contingency plan but my gut said he probably did. He seemed too calm. When I had seen the boat moored in Mangrove Bay I estimated there had to be at least ten, possibly as many as fifteen crew. David figured that, with the captives we now had, up to six men would be part of any rescue attempt, leaving a crew to guard the boat and cargo. He studied my map. By sea, they could sail into the Great Sound to Eli's harbor via Sandys Narrow and walk from there or continue on south along the shore to George Bay behind the Brother Islands. Another option, of several, was to sail round Daniel's Head, on the northwest corner of Somerset Island, and then south along the shoreline to Hog Bay in Eli's harbor. They were most likely to attack at night but we couldn't be sure. Sunrise was at about 7:00. It was now about 1:00am. If our suppositions were right we had a little time to organize our defenses. We needed a scout to keep us informed. Argie said he could send one of his men to tell Ezra what had happened and to get him to set up a watch for movement through Eli's harbor and warn us accordingly. He should have someone posted in Mangrove Bay, hidden but close to the pirate vessel and someone else on the shore behind Brothers Islands, as soon as possible, in case there was a quick response from the pirates. With that he left to organize his men while I went to my room and Frobisher found another bed for David.

Frobisher woke us at dawn to tell us Argie was in the kitchen. He had received word from Ezra that there had been no movement in Mangrove Bay. So it seemed that any attack would not come until sundown. Argie had nine men with suitable weapons standing by to be deployed as necessary. The previous evening he had sent Mary and the children to stay with neighbors. Now, we waited until early evening, when a message from Ezra came that a longboat with five crew was being rowed along the west shore from Daniel's Head and was being watched. If it entered Eli's harbor we would be told. Fifteen minutes later another message. The longboat had skirted Eli's harbor and was moving on down the coast.

Argie took his men to the hill above the coastline close to the mansion to keep watch. The plan was to allow the pirates ashore. They would need to climb the hill to approach the mansion up an obvious path through thick undergrowth and they could be taken as they climbed. David and I stayed at the mansion. A message came back from Argie. The longboat had not appeared. They must have stopped at a point close to Eli's harbor. Just then a further message from Ezra telling us just that. Boat was beached and five armed men were moving towards the mansion. A message was sent to Argie to pull back to the mansion, as the attack was coming from further north. He arrived and quickly sketched a map of the property with the possible approaches the attackers might make under cover. There weren't many and it was doubtful they would know the land, the hidden ones they wouldn't know about. We had to hurry. There were three likely paths. There were twelve of us, plus Frobisher, who stayed with two loaded pistols in the locked-up mansion, in case any of the attackers got through. Three men per path with Argie, David, and I ready to reinforce as necessary.

We heard them approach. A clink of metal on stone and a whispered order for silence along one path. Then a shout, quickly cut off, down another path and further disturbances as more of the attackers were taken out of action. The ambush spurred the remaining attackers to run up the path. Of the five, two appeared, who were quickly

dealt with and Argie's men returned with two captives. Where was the fifth? Argie told his men to tie the prisoners to trees and leave one guard. The rest should follow us back to the mansion. David and I turned and ran there. At that moment we heard a pistol shot and a cry. Four men—one was Seth with a useless arm, sitting on the ground, shot by Frobisher from a window. The fifth attacker had found and released Seth and the other two from the hut. They turned, armed, to confront us.

I had my sword drawn and David his cutlass. I told Argie and his men, now gathering, to stand back and deal with anyone trying to escape. I was able to skewer a pirate through the shoulder and turned on the two fighting David. One transferred attention to me, large, powerful and good with a heavy cutlass capable of breaking my rapier. Although I was more nimble, he was able to crowd me and I gave ground, stumbled, and had to fling myself sideways to avoid a scything sweep which would have taken my head off. Argie leapt forward and fought the man off. Then, surrounded, the pirate surrendered, dropped his weapon, and told the pirate fighting David to do likewise. Argie told his men to pick up the weapons and bind the pirates, including Seth. It turned out the pirate was Portuguese out of the Azores, and had been retained by Hook to smuggle the cargo for a cut of the net proceeds.

Seth and the pirates were taken to join the others while David and I went to the kitchen to discuss our next steps. We had Hook and Sly, as well as the pirate group, which complicated things. I said we really would be better off if the pirates were removed from the scene. David agreed and after some thought, jumped to his feet and left, saying "leave it to me."

I told Hook the rescue attempt had failed and took him to see Captain Tucker. Tucker was weak and looked terminally ill, which he was. However, he was able to swear at Hook, in a whisper. Hook was shocked at Tucker's appearance and saw that whatever threat he had over him was now irrelevant. He realized he could no longer sell his contraband. Very disgruntled, he was returned to the cellar.

A while later, David returned and told me my wish was granted. I asked him what had happened. He said that he had made a deal with the pirate captain. The pirates were all returning to their ship and are expected to reload the cargo and to sail away immediately, never to return. A good deal for the pirate. He had several men wounded in the affray but now had a rich cargo he could sell elsewhere. It had been a busy night. I checked that Seth was secured and went to bed.

Next morning, I was awake with the sunrise and went down to the kitchen to be joined by David and then Argie. Argie had heard from St. George's that the Reverend Stirk had been arrested by Governor Woodhouse. He had been representing the interests of the local farmers against the demands the Governor was making with respect to duty payments on tobacco. Woodhouse had become so incensed at Stirk's perceived insolence that he was put in prison. The expectation was that Woodhouse would ensure that Stirk was removed from the island for gross insubordination or some such. I felt sorry for the man. He seemed a thoroughly decent person. But I was puzzled.

"I'm sorry to hear about Stirk's difficulties but what has that got to do with us?"

"When Tucker hears about it and understands the implications he will be furious. He considers Stirk to be one of his retainers. He didn't want Woodhouse poking his nose into West End matters, in case he uncovered the smuggling activity and the threat of Hook exposing him."

I was still puzzled. "But wasn't his smuggling always going to be a problem with the authorities?"

"As long as Tucker was able to keep a wall between his affairs and the Governor, he would be able to hand Hook over as a clear indication that he was in control and no further action was needed. Woodhouse arresting Stirk will show Tucker that his wall has been breached and Woodhouse will not, in all probability, be content with taking in Hook merely on Tucker's say so. He would want a full investigation—not something Tucker would relish."

I thought back to our earlier conversation about what to do with Hook.

“It seems to me that we are back to what we had considered before we caught Hook. If I was Tucker, I would want Hook quietly removed from the island with Woodhouse none the wiser. Come to think of it, much as it pains me to say so, that would be best solution for us, too.”

“What about Seth?”

“Good question. We can’t leave him to the Governor’s tender mercies. Seth will spill the beans in exchange for leniency. That will result in much the same problem we have with Hook and I’m damned if I let him go.”

David said, “In that case we will simply press him into the crew of *Swallow*.”

Argie said he would keep him confined until *Swallow* was ready to sail. He would be escorted to St. George’s and taken aboard while Governor Woodhouse remained none the wiser, hopefully.

I wanted to spend some time with Hook before agreeing any plan. However, I was determined to spend the days until *Swallow* was ready with Argie and his family rebuilding my relationship with James and, more importantly, allowing his healing to continue. David returned to St. Georges.

## — CHAPTER 32 —

*Swallow* had been repaired and refloated without mishap. She was now anchored out in the harbor while J.B. awaited instructions about departure, where and when, the crew restless and ready to leave. As yet the supplies intended for Cape Ann had not been loaded. However, Chips and the crew had gone over every spar, line, cable, and sail, repairing, replacing, splicing, and stitching. The frame was in good condition, the planking sound and recaulked, everything decidedly shipshape. Mr. Jacobson was persuaded that the damage caused to *Swallow* was due in part to the carelessness of people in his employ. The vessel that had drifted into *Swallow* had not been moored properly by his dock crew when it had come in for servicing. Some discussion had taken place between J.B., Chips, Jacobson, and his yard foreman as to the extent of the work actually undertaken by the yard. Anyway, all had been eventually agreed and the amount owed to Jacobson I considered reasonable.

David had been to meet with the Governor, who was in a foul mood. He was aggravated about a host of issues but particularly about goings on in the Southampton and Sandys tribes. He had imagined a number of disasters caused by our search for James and our uncovering all sorts of schemes that threatened his survival: piracy, treason, religious strife. He had tried to ignore it as he had told us he would, but trickles of information were getting back to him which caused him sleepless nights and he admitted that Tucker's possible involvement was a nightmare. David told him that we had recovered my son

and detained the kidnapper, who we would be taking back to England as soon as we could. He assured the Governor that there was no piracy that we were able to discover, nor were there any other cause for concern with respect to plots and treasonous activities, the reason for the kidnapping was simply one of revenge. The boy's mother had been instrumental in having the kidnapper's brother recaptured while escaping authorities in England where he had been arrested for a capital crime. As a final salve David said that Tucker was unwell, mortally so. He was not expected to live much longer. Woodhouse had remained silent throughout David's narrative. At the end, he smiled.

"Mr. Tremaine, that's a relief. Thank you. Now when do you expect to sail?"

"Well, sir. *Swallow* is in the final stages of repair. We will be pleased to inform you of our intentions as soon as Mr. Jacobson and Mr. Stanfield agree completion."

With that the Governor nodded, rose to his feet, shook hands with David and dismissed him. David returned to the Overplus to report on his activities.

David asked about Hook and I told him he was still captive but being well looked after. In David's opinion, he should be let go to find his own way back to England. Hook had his own troubles, including a massive debt on the contraband he had hoped to sell to Tucker. I said I wanted to talk to him first.

I asked, "What happened to Dorothy?"

"She has already left the island, on a boat bound for Virginia. Interestingly enough, it was the *Mary Evans* out of Bristol. Your friend Captain Walter Morris. The boat the Reverend Spurling suggested you might come to Bermuda on."

"David, I want to return to England as soon as possible. I know we had agreed to go to Cape Ann but I have no interest in sailing into a New England winter. If necessary we can make a trip there later next year."

"What about the produce you had bartered for the freight we brought to Bermuda?"

I replied, “We should negotiate a new barter agreement, based on cedar, sugar cane, and tobacco. It would be nice to have some casks of fine Caribbean rum to take back as well. All of which should fetch a high price in England.”

“Right, leave me to deal with that. Now, how soon do you think you will be ready to return to St. George’s?”

I thought about it. I wanted to give James a belated Christmas with the Trescothick family.

“Give me five days. *Swallow* should be loaded and ready to sail as soon as I return. Seth should be pressed and made a member of the crew. Make Obi responsible for enforcing his impressment. We will decide what to do with him when we get back to England.”

David returned to St. George’s, with a sullen, captive Seth, to make ready and await my return with James. I talked to Mary about organizing a special Christmas for the children. She said it was all planned for 1 January, in two days. I spent time with James but refrained from any questions that might be detrimental to his continued recovery. I enjoyed the relationship he had with the other children and was careful not to intrude. At one point, to confirm what I had been observing, I asked Mary how she felt about James.

“Sue has been a God-send. The first few nights James had some serious nightmares. She was always there to comfort him. During the day, she would ask him what he was dreaming about. Mostly a sense of being entirely alone in a black cave with a monster creeping towards him. Eventually, the nightmare ended with you chasing the monster away.”

Mary said sadly that Sue was devoted to James and would be grief stricken when he left. At a suitable moment I told Sue how grateful James and I were for her caring and comfort that brought James back to life.

I went to see Hook in his captive quarters. He was still in the basement but in quite comfortable circumstances. Bed, table, chair, piss pot, washstand, and books. He invited me to sit, quite the host. I was amused at his lack of concern about his predicament.



“Mr. Hook, you interest me. Last time I saw you, you looked and acted the mean devil. I barely recognized you when I saw you again.”

He grinned. “One has to act the part. Dealing with rough people it’s best to appear rough yourself.”

“How did you get to Bermuda so quickly?”

“Not so quickly. When I saw you in Dartmouth, I was ready to board a merchantman bound for the East Indies that would drop me off in the Azores. It left from Bristol two days later. It made a quick passage. I was there by the end of October.”

“How did you recruit Seth?”

I had spent the better part of the year looking for someone who could act as my agent in Bermuda. I knew Tucker was an unreliable client and wanted someone to seek other likely prospects. Nothing too difficult, just to keep his eyes open. Word was out. Some time around June, Seth came to me saying he was keen to leave England. I agreed to hire him if he could find passage to Bermuda. If he could do that, I felt he had the initiative I wanted in my agent. After a month or two, he came back saying he had found passage on the *Concord* and would be going to Bermuda as a family. I asked no questions. I did have his background checked. He was being sought for some crime he had committed and was obviously anxious to leave. The fact that he was a wanted criminal meant I had a hold over him. If he misbehaved he was told that the authorities would be alerted to where he was.”

“You had no idea about his family?”

“No, I didn’t have time or much inclination to find out. He appeared at the right time, showed the necessary initiative, I employed him and left for the Azores.”

“What now?”

“That’s for you to say. I am your captive. While I am an accessory to your son’s kidnapping, I had no knowledge of it and I do not believe I, personally, have caused you any harm. There is no direct evidence as to the reason you are holding me—no smuggled goods, no smuggler.”

I smiled, ruefully.

He went on, "I'm not sure what case you have even if you take me back to England. I am not wanted there, I have debts that I will deal with and as far as the authorities are concerned in England I am a legitimate businessman."

Hook was right, I had no reason to hold him. In spite of my earlier impressions, I found him to be an interesting, likeable rogue if not entirely trustworthy.

"We plan to return to England in a few days. Would you like to take passage with us?"

"That would be splendid. Thank you."

I left him with the door to his cell ajar and went upstairs. I told Frobisher Mr. Hook was now freed and a guest, leaving him and Hook to decide what that meant and went to find Argie out in the fields. I found him on the edge of his tobacco plantation looking over the cliffs at the surf down below.

"Watching anything in particular?"

"Welcome Isaac. Yes, I'm here most days, it's a view to calm the soul. The waves over the reefs, the water every shade of blue to green, the sea looks so friendly from here."

After a moment of contemplation Argie said, "I have come to understand that I must make a decision about my family's future. Captain Tucker is not long for this world, with sons and a nephew who are expected to take over his estate. I must decide whether to continue here hoping to be retained by his family or move on."

"Why would you wish to move on? You have established your worth, your family settled. What does Mary say?"

"She will go where I go."

"But what would she do if the choice were hers?"

"I haven't asked her but I suspect she would want to stay."

"What do you want to do?"

"I miss the sea but I had no wife or family when I was a sailor. I have become a farmer."

"You are a successful farm manager. You are respected by your

men and by Tucker. It seems you are liked by your neighbors, which means they respect you too. You have space, you live in idyllic surroundings, and your family is healthy. So I'm not sure what you question."

Argie sighed. "I'm an old sailor which remains an unresolved part of me, of my youth. You're right. I couldn't wish for a better life for me and my family. Where else could I possibly go? Virginia? New England? I would have to start again in a less comfortable climate with greater risk of failure. Back to England? To squalor, unemployment, overcrowding."

I clapped him on the back and congratulated him for committing himself and his family to Bermuda and its future. He laughed and we walked back to his house. He went to talk to Mary—about time, I thought.

I returned to the mansion and sat in the library for a while reading, when Hook came in. We went for a walk, he was a pleasant companion, interesting, a man of many parts.

### **Journal entry—*January 1625***

Next day, we had a family Christmas celebration. Green foliage decorated the Trescothick home, a large, fallen cedar was found, cut up, and did service as a yule log, a Christmas meal was prepared and served with carols sung, a punch bowl was prepared to help wet our throats as we sang. We raised a toast to absent family and friends. David came for the day and we invited Frobisher and Hook, who both joined in the festivities. James was delighted and a delight to all. I missed Annie dreadfully.

I walked with James to meet Ezra. Crossing Somerset Bridge we saw Anthony, off the beach in the Great Sound, teaching the children on their new boat. We walked along the shoreline to meet them. James was enveloped by a swarm of happy children who dragged him with them to play in the water. He was soon soaked through

but happy. I saw Ezra sitting on a rock looking down at us. He came down and with Anthony we chatted as we watched the children. I thanked Ezra for his help and told them what had happened. He said that Mr. Trescothick had already been to see and thank him for his participation.

“Ah but Ezra, your help was vital in alerting us in time to thwart whatever designs the pirate had. Anyway, all’s well that ends well. We are soon back to England.”

The conversation continued about my plans and what they envisioned for Bermuda. They hoped more enlightened times would come but they feared matters were only getting worse. I could offer them little cheer. I had no idea what Tucker’s family was like but I was certain they would want to come and continue to develop the Tucker investment in Bermuda and hoped they would bring enlightenment with them. As we left, I asked Anthony whether he would be able to bring James and me back to St. George’s with him the next day. It was probable we would have a third with us. He said he would meet us at midday at the beach behind the Brothers Islands. The children embraced James, some tears were shed, we all wished good fortune to each other, and we walked home, James quietly holding my hand until we approached the mansion. Then his spirit lifted and he ran to find Sue.

The following morning James and I said our sad farewells to the Trescothick family. We did not know if we would ever meet again. Mary was sad but still looked radiant; Argie had obviously agreed with her that they would be staying in Bermuda and her future was assured. I went to the mansion and Frobisher took me upstairs to say goodbye to Captain Tucker. He looked small and wizened in his massive four poster. He wished me well. I’m not sure he knew who I was. Back downstairs I thanked Agatha and Frobisher before leaving them. James, Hook, and I walked down to the beach accompanied by Argie and Sue, who clutched onto James’ hand all the way. Anthony was at the beach waiting for us. Argie was sad in his leave taking, Sue was bereft. Two forlorn figures waving us goodbye as we left.

Anthony sailed us along the coastline of the Great Sound, north past Sandys Narrow leading to Somerset Bridge, past the cliffs Ezra's children used as a lookout. There they were looking down at us waving and shouting. We waved back till we were out of sight. Anthony took us on a tour, with James at the helm, through the gap between Watford and Somerset Islands into Mangrove Bay, avoiding the many shoals past Gates Island and on to Ireland Island. James, now sleepy, cuddled close to me, trailing a hand over the side to catch the spray or sighting the fish that swam with us. We crossed the Great Sound to Spanish Point and up the North Shore to Coney Island. Anthony furled the sail, shipped the mast, and rowed us under the bridge and round to the boatyard. There we left him, another sad departure. Unable to express the depths of my gratitude for his support and friendship, I could only take both his hands in mine and whisper "Thank you." Anthony smiled and wished us a safe passage back to England and the hope we would return. I carried the sleeping James back to the boatyard. *Swallow* was alongside, cargo loaded and stowed, ready for departure.

Hook was welcomed aboard with some surprise but David handed him off to J.B. to find him a suitable berth. He was invited to investigate the slop chest for additional clothing he might need for the voyage. Seth, under Obi's watchful eye, was being introduced to his new life as a crewman. He received no favors and was pushed hard. No time for complaints, a leather strap applied to the back was a timely reminder if he slacked. Jacob Hallet came to bid us farewell. He had been present when David had met with the Governor. It was clear from his expression that he was aware that there was more to the story than the narration provided. He shook my hand and suggested that one day if I should return to Bermuda he would like to hear the whole story.

We sailed from St. George's on 6 January, 1625. Once clear of the reefs, we headed northeast, a good breeze from the southeast, sun with high clouds. David had been advised that we would pick up the prevailing westerlies a few days out of Bermuda. J.B., officer of the

watch, observed that it looked like fine sailing weather for the foreseeable future. And so it was. *Swallow* had been pampered, as only a boat with a good crew that had time on their hands could provide. Even the hold was sweet smelling, bilges had been pumped dry and scrubbed while the boat was ashore, the new cedar hull planking combined with the cedar cargo and rum casks all contributed to a sense of well-being and eager anticipation for a memorable journey back to England. James found a favorite place tucked in a lee corner the cockpit, watching the foaming water cascade along the side of the hull. Small birds followed alongside and around the boat, skinning over and playing hide and seek round the waves. Occasionally, dolphins would appear and accompany us for a while before slipping away. James found it all fascinating. Five days out of Bermuda the expected westerlies filled in. We turned east, which had us running downwind all the way the Azores. I had ensured we had gunpowder aplenty so Guns was given the opportunity to have regular gunnery practice with the crew. We were lightly armed so would not be much of a threat, but the crew enjoyed the exercise and the sound and fury of the guns. James, in his corner, well aft out of the way, was transfixed by it all, eyes shining.

Hook asked whether it would be possible to make a stop in the Azores, at Horta on the island of Faial. He had business he needed to deal with and possessions he needed to retrieve. David was willing—we had been at sea for two weeks and welcomed the chance to refill the water casks and for the crew to stretch their legs ashore, under the watchful eyes of Obi and J.B. We arrived 21 January and anchored in the bay off Horta, sheltered from the westerlies. I took James ashore and he sought out a beach so he could demonstrate his swimming skills. Seth had been making heavy weather of his duties as a crewman, his mean spirit earning him no friends. He was kept aboard. I talked to David about the final leg of our journey back to Plymouth. He was worried about meeting unfriendly vessels. Our only defenses were speed and ability to sail close to the wind. The following day we set sail. Hook had retrieved a couple of chests and

seemed content with whatever had transpired in Horta. I didn't ask. A day out, winds shifted to the northwest as we headed northeast, a steady strong breeze over our larboard beam. *Swallow* loved it and we were logging almost 200 miles a day. At this rate we would be in Plymouth in a week.

On 23 January, late afternoon sail sighted two points off our starboard bow. J.B. went up the rigging with a spyglass. He announced that it was a barque, sailing south about 10 miles away. The lookout was told to keep the deck informed of its movement. Within 5 minutes, a shout from the lookout, the barque had turned and was heading to cut us off. It was too big to fight, we had to run. David ordered helm up to head north. I sent James below, much against his will. I told him to stay in his berth until we were safe. The barque headed up as well, but with the wind northwest was unable to point high enough. It was a race. Could we reach the closest point on our converging paths while still out of effective range of her guns?

The distance narrowed quickly. The oncoming vessel had crowded on all sails, braced hard over, she made a threatening sight with huge bow wave. I went forward and watched her to measure our relative positions, lining her up with our starboard forward shroud. If her position didn't change we were on a direct collision course. If her position relative to the shroud moved aft, then we were gaining on her. There was a slight wind shift toward the north, the barque picked up on it immediately and headed further west to their advantage. We were sailing hard on the wind already. Her relative position moved forward. The shift was short lived and veered back, now we were definitely gaining. We were no more than two miles apart but she couldn't bring her guns to bear without heading downwind and away from us. Our relative closing speed was over 10 knots. In 5 minutes she was within a mile and now tracking to pass well behind us. At that moment, she eased her sheets and two of her for'ard starboard guns were fired. Grapeshot to dismast us. One round splashed short of our bows, the other over our stern. We were rapidly moving away. One final shot landed short and they gave up the chase. We

continued north for another 30 minutes before easing round to our former heading. Our cannons were cleared and David congratulated the crew. Guns was disconsolate—all that practice and no action. Crew cheered, James was called topside to his delight, and we settled down. I asked David who he thought the barque was. No flag so probably pirate or privateer. On the other hand, they might have thought us a pirate. Safety in flight, he said with a grin.

Weather changed rapidly. It seemed to get colder by the hour. Sun long gone, heavy cloud and rising seas, wind increased, reefs into main and jib, stays'l furlled, *Swallow* becoming less comfortable as she fought the waves, our speed reduced but we were still logging 6 knots. James was now happy to spend more time below. David correctly estimated we would arrive in Plymouth by 1 February. Mid-afternoon in heavy snow, visibility less than a mile, we worked our way round Rame Head into Plymouth Sound in contrary winds and tacked our way to the Pool. By dusk we were anchored and secure.



## — CHAPTER 33 —

### **Journal entry—*February 1625***

James and I were rowed to the quay. Hand in hand with James skipping in excitement, when he wasn't lurching with his sea legs and sliding in the snow, we walked home a huge knot of anticipation in my stomach. Whimple Street loomed up in the snowy darkness. I told James to knock on the door and stood back. It was opened by Annie. She looked down at the upturned grinning face. A joyous shout and James was clutched to her huge tummy. She buried her head in his hair, whispering sweet sounds to him as he hugged her fiercely. Stepping back and releasing him, she looked him up and down and shook her head.

"Mr. James Stanfield. You have grown. I am amazed."

Her head lifted, and with tear filled eyes we gazed at each other. Time stopped. Then, "Quickly. My lovelies. It's freezing and wet. Come in, come in."

Abigail was sitting in a high seat at the kitchen table, craning round to see what was happening. She saw James, frowned, and then laughed as he ran to her and they hugged each other. Annie turned and stood tall with her hands resting on my shoulders, her eyes roving over my face, fingers reaching up to touch my lips and hair. I wiped away her tears, laughed with sheer pleasure and gathered her to me.

“Where’s Jeannie?”

“Upstairs preparing a bath for me. She will be down in a minute. I’m sure she will be happy for you to bathe me instead.”

She smiled coyly as she said it.

“Now husband mine, you smell, you should have the first bath, the fire is well lit in our bedroom, it will heat a second pan.”

I laughed and said, “No, wife mine. If you bathe after me you will end up smelling like I do.”

Jeannie came down, shrieked her greeting and lifted James high, tears streaming down her face. We left her to sort out the children and went upstairs. Annie needed her bath and then a rest. I gently undressed her, washed, dried, and helped her into her nightgown and put her to bed, sleepy. I used Annie’s bath water to wash myself and scrub my smells away. As she lay there she told me to rest my head on her tummy to hear the heartbeat of our child. Dried, I lay down beside her and listened, then leaving her to sleep—she said for just an hour—I returned to the kitchen where, supper eaten, Jeannie was tidying while James described his adventures to her. Abigail, initially fascinated by her big brother, was not comprehending much of what he said. It was an opportunity for me to reacquaint myself with my daughter. We were still talking and laughing, both children on my knees, when Annie came down. Bedtime for the children, Jeannie took them away and we promised to come and say their prayers with them. Annie and I sat in front of the fire holding hands, such deep contentment. Jeannie came down to say the children were in bed. We went up and recited their prayers with them, James most enthusiastically. He had learned others from Ezra which he taught us.

We had a simple dinner cooked by Jeannie, after which she wished us a good night and went to her room with her meal on a tray. Relaxing together in front of a roaring fire, I asked Annie when she was due.

“According to Sarah, two weeks.”

With Annie’s prompting, I told her the story of our quest for James. I said I had written everything in my journal, but she wanted me to tell her every detail. It was late by the time I got to the point

where James was safely aboard *Swallow* and we were ready to depart Bermuda. In the telling I painted Hook as a likeable rogue. “Isaac, my dear husband, you recognize and appreciate the rogue element, being something of a rogue yourself.”

I carried my dear, darling wife up the stairs, her arms around my neck, and to bed. Jeannie had stoked up the fire but it was burning down to embers. We closed the curtains round the bed and lay together. Annie was happy to doze off to sleep with her head on my shoulder, while I guided my fingertips, so softly, over her body. On her tummy I felt the kick of the baby and so rested my hand there in communion with the newest member of the family till I too slept.

Next morning, Annie was up before me. Curtains round the bed drawn wide, a large fire blazing in the grate, already light outside though grey. I dressed and went downstairs for a simple breakfast, the children had long since finished theirs. How quickly life returned to normal, the children engrossed in their own happy world barely noticed my coming and going. Annie saw my look of consternation, laughed, and said, “Welcome home, my husband.”

A long and satisfying kiss, a hug, a promise to be back for lunch and I was away to the Pool where *Swallow* was alongside. The authorities had been alerted that we had a felon on board. A bailiff turned up as I arrived and Seth was removed. He was almost relieved to be off *Swallow*, it had been a hard trip for him. Hook had departed the night before. The customs officer insisted we move *Swallow* to the naval dockyard as we had highly dutiable rum aboard, not to mention other valuable cargo. It was to be bonded immediately until the full appraised value could be calculated and the duty paid. I left David to deal with it all.

I had a list of duties to perform: To talk to Ned’s family and provide them with details of his death; to meet with *Swallow*’s other owners, Richard Bushrode and Henri Giradeau; to see John Gorges, and Sir F. if he was around; a letter to P. in Dorchester to tell him what I had learned in Bermuda and explain why I had been unable to go to Cape Ann; together with David, to meet Richard Bushrode

and Isaiah Brown to discuss the future of *Rosie*.

I was told that Richard was in Weymouth. I sent a message to him. Henri was available and immediately invited me to lunch which I regretfully turned down. Perhaps tomorrow. I went to the Fort. As it happened Sir F. was in Plymouth. I met with him and John in his office. Sir F. had aged. He greeted me as an old friend. I was pleased to see him, it had been a while. John was saddened to hear of Ned's death and gave me the address of his parents. I summarized the efforts to find and rescue James and they wished me joy on his recovery. Sir F. was fascinated to learn about the happenings in Bermuda. He and John had only heard a filtered description of Bermuda through their contacts in London. They listened in silence as I gave a fairly full account of the situation there. They thought the settlement's development, compared to Virginia, was a considerable achievement. I described the many issues there, and how they seemed to be dealing with them, and yet the Gorges' contacts in London had given them short shrift. They were amazed at that apparent indifference, especially, when I told them I had returned with a valuable cargo, even in a small vessel with a limited cargo handling capability. Sir F. asked me what I thought were the major challenges.

"I would say the need for a strong Governor, elected by the settlers. Weak ones appointed from London play havoc with the relative stability of the settlement. The large number of slaves who are being treated badly. The gap in the living standards between the tenant farmers, workers, and indentured servants. There is a constant turnover in settlers who come in anticipation of a comfortable if hardworking life and find little improvement over their lives back in England. This is exacerbated by the number of ne'er do wells enlisted and shipped over."

I was mindful of my promise to Annie. I begged to be excused to meet again in the near future. Sir F. told me he was on his way to London but would be pleased to see me whenever our paths crossed. John walked me to the door and said he was keen to meet with me at my convenience as there were further matters to be discussed. We

agreed to meet at 9:00am the following day.

Back to Whimble St. for lunch. As I walked to the house, I had the same excitement I felt yesterday when James and I arrived home. Into the kitchen and a merry chaos, Annie sitting watching and beaming, Jeannie attempting to instill order unsuccessfully. Lunch was served with much chatter. They planned to go to the Hoe that afternoon to make snowmen. I wished I was going with them.

I met with Mr. Scroud in his office. He welcomed me warmly and congratulated me on the success of my adventure, as he called it.

“Mr. Stanfield, I have been making a rough calculation of the net proceeds from the cargo you brought back from the Somers Isles. I believe the amount due to you and your partners after all costs and duties are paid will be in the region of £100. You recovered your son and earned a profit. As a half owner, you should expect approximately £50.”

I thanked him for his diligence and asked how my other interests were doing. I was concerned about *Rosie*.

“Ah well. The political situation in Europe is unstable. We are seen, by the French, as being in sympathy with the Huguenots, which makes trading with the French difficult. Then we continue to have the pirate scourge which threatens shipping in the Bay of Biscay and the Mediterranean. The Dutch are allied with the French or otherwise are not amicably inclined to the English and King James is not being ably supported by his advisors. Within these four walls, I’m afraid the Duke of Buckingham is a liability, but as he is reputed to have the most intimate relations with the King there is naught that can be done.”

I responded to this tale of woe, “Now, Mr. Scroud, whenever I ask you for a report, you always begin by pointing out how dire everything is. You’ve given me the bad news. What about the good?”

“Actually, Mr. Stanfield, I haven’t quite finished with the bad. The *Sweet Rose* is reaching the end of its effective life as a merchantman. It costs more to maintain her than she earns for us. Mr. Brown is still Skipper. He is loath to hand control over to someone he doesn’t

know. Mr. Jones has stated he will retire when Mr. Brown does. You, by transferring Mr. Braddock to *Swallow*, removed the last candidate Mr. Brown was prepared to consider as his successor.”

“Mr. Scroud, I am due to meet with my fellow owners of the *Sweet Rose* in the near future. I will let you know when we have decided what we should do.”

Mr. Scroud nodded and continued, “In spite of the unsettled state of affairs on the Continent, Sir Ferdinando has, until recently at least, been successful in his trading activities. You remain a twenty percent minority partner in his enterprises. There has been a steady stream of income which I have placed into your account. But I have taken the liberty of increasing the amount made available for further investment. While you do receive a return from the trading activities of the *Sweet Rose*, it is relatively minor. Mr. Bushrode has graciously allowed us to invest in some of his other activities as a silent partner. The same applies to M. Giradeau.”

I interrupted him.

“I thought you said *Rosie* wasn’t paying her way.”

“For the money you invested, you are receiving little in return.”

I asked whether I could afford to continue to own her. It seemed that Mr. Scroud had been diligent in the management of my affairs and admitted I could as my total assets, including house and ships were in excess of £3,000. We then discussed *Swallow*. He said that we had been fortunate but for the regrettable loss of Ned. We had not only survived in a boat not designed for extensive deep water sailing, we had been successful in our mission. I admitted that *Swallow* really was better suited for coastal trade and we discussed the possibilities for expanding that enterprise.

I returned home. The snow had stopped but the wind had picked up and was blowing the snow along the streets and between the houses. Difficult to clear and worse to walk through. I was chilled by the time I entered a toasty warm kitchen. Standing by the fire I received a report from all and sundry about the afternoon on the Hoe. Wrong snow for snowmen too dry, too windy. They were well

bundled so were happy to play in the snow. Annie became tired and called it a day after an hour. Abigail was exhausted but refused to admit it, until Jeannie offered to carry her home. She was asleep on her shoulder within a minute or two. Jeannie took them off for a nap while I sat with Annie in front of the fire. We didn't speak much, just deliciously content to share the same space in peace and comfort. An hour or so later Jeannie came down with the children and cooked for us. A happy family gathering. We had an early night. Annie went up while I wrote to Ned's parents. It was a difficult letter to write, Ned was young with an exciting life still ahead of him. I said he had died courageously in a violent storm putting himself in mortal danger to save his crewmates. Up to bed. Cuddled and warm in our curtained four-poster, the sound of the wind outside, the occasional rattle of the window shutters when a heavy gust hit us. We slept soundly the night through.

The following morning, 3 February, I presented myself at John Gorges' office at the appointed hour. We sat around a cheerful fire with warm rum toddies. John apologized for his father's evident distraction at our meeting the previous day. Robert's failure in New England had knocked the stuffing out of him. Added to that, Robert upon his return had gone into seclusion, unwell. The family was worried about him. John asked if I remembered the plans Sir F. had for the Council for New England to build a large merchantman called the *Great Neptune* in Whitby, Yorkshire. I said that it must have been at least two years ago. I thought the Council's dire financial straits had stopped its construction.

"Correct. However, a mortgage was raised to provide funding to complete it. My father saw no useful purpose in retaining it for use in New England. He has been trying to find a buyer for it. With the worsening situation in France, King James is being pressured to provide the French Government with naval ships to blockade or even attack the rebel port cities held by the Huguenots and the *Great Neptune* is being considered. My father is sympathetic to the Huguenots so is in a quandary. Added to that, in his capacity in Plymouth

as guardian of the western approaches to England, his attention has been diverted away from any further consideration of New England, certainly until the political situation resolves itself.”

“Does that mean he has given up his long term investment in New England? Is the Council now defunct?”

“Over the last year he had a debilitating row in the Privy Council over his attempts to control the rights to fish in New England waters. As you know, he wanted the licensing of fishing to provide much needed income to establish settlements and support them. The *Great Neptune* had been intended for that purpose. At one stage he was battling to retain control of the Council, more than that, fighting for its survival. However, in the end the Council continues under his control but without the rights to license fishing in New England waters.”

“Without any source of income how can the Council survive?”

John laughed, with little humor. “By not spending any money. At some point I expect he will re-energize himself and find more investors. But an added complication is the bankruptcy of the Virginia Company. It has, for all intents, been handed over to the Crown.”

I thought through the implications.

“It seems to me that Sir Ferdinando was battling the Government to let the Council keep the rights to fish in New England waters specifically to prevent the Virginia Company from encroachment. At the same time the Government needed access to the fishing grounds to support the Company it now owned.”

“Something like that. Even more, any English fishing interest has the right to fish in New England waters, including access to wood and such like to service their fishing fleet. While it was the Virginia Company that had initiated the action in the Privy Council, it was the West Country fishing interests that won the day. Sad that the same people my father defended in his role as Governor should have fought him and won in their own self-interest. I know my father had little interest in Virginia except in trying to combat its encroachment, but the success of Bermuda, as evidenced by your description



yesterday, leaves him cold. Too small, too out of the way. No possibility of significant expansion. Irrelevant as far as New England is concerned.”

I begged to differ. It was a model that should be examined in the development of settlements elsewhere. It provided a convenient supply source. With the flow of settlers through Bermuda, it might provide a source for recruitment. However, John had other things on his mind.

“Isaac, I wanted to talk to you about *Swallow*. What are your intentions? I seem to remember you thinking about using her in support of your other vessel, the *Sweet Rose*, to trade with the Spanish. To combat pirates.”

“Yes, I still believe we need to solve that problem. Sending individual merchantmen into pirate infested waters is too dangerous. However, I don’t believe *Swallow* is the right boat for that. She is too light, limited armaments, insufficient cargo capacity. Why do you ask?”

“Piracy remains a serious concern. In fact it has worsened. We are having problems trading with France. Spain is an attractive market and source of commerce. We need to solve this piracy issue. I would like to review our agreement with you with respect to our use of *Swallow* as a courier. There is increased need to deliver and receive special freight along the South coast and to London. Too heavy to carry by horse. Delivery too slow if sent by wagon or coach. However, let us leave that for a later discussion. I have another appointment now.”

I had a fine lunch with Henri. We talked about La Rochelle and how his fellow Huguenots viewed their future in France. He said he saw a coming disaster. Many of his friends had left and moved to trading centers throughout Europe. He was thankful he had moved his family to Plymouth. I asked after his daughter.

“I now have my third grandchild, a girl. She is called Salome.”

I had fond memories of his family and asked to be remembered to them. The next day, I had a note from Richard. He had returned to Plymouth, as had Isaiah Brown. I arranged a meeting at Henri’s

office including Isaiah, Richard, and David Tremaine. David and I provided a detailed narrative of our journey. When we had finished, Isaiah asked David what he planned to do.

“Mr. Brown, I much enjoyed my time on *Swallow*. However, I do not see myself continuing as her Captain.”

I could see where Skipper was heading and asked him about the status of *Rosie*.

“Ah, Isaac. She is a fine vessel. She has several more years ahead of her, as long as we keep her well-maintained. She is in dock now. I have laid her up for the winter. She is being surveyed and we should have an estimate of the necessary repairs by the first week in March.”

I asked, “Assuming the repairs are made and we decide we have another two or more years’ use of her who should we appoint as her Skipper?”

Isaiah thought for a while. He must have been mulling it over for the past year.

Finally he said, “I have a good crew. There have been many changes among the officers and petty officers. I like the new officer complement but no one there is yet ready to assume command. You took Braddock to be mate on *Swallow*. How did he turn out?”

“David Tremaine was given command when Ned Sampson died. J.B., in my opinion, was not up to the responsibility at that point.”- David spoke up. “J.B. is a fine sailor, experienced and competent in all areas of command. He is completely reliable. He just lacks some self-confidence. If he were to spend a year as Skipper of *Swallow* it would do his confidence a world of good. Alternatively, under the right captain of *Rosie*, he would gain that confidence as first mate.”

Skipper looked questioningly at David for a long moment.

“Mr. Tremaine, I asked you earlier about what you planned to do. You did not give me a full answer.”

It was David’s turn to be thoughtful.

“Well, Mr. Brown, let me say that I am content to be back sailing. I spent too many years dealing with intrigue, working for Sir Ferdinando. I was young and eager for new adventures. The weeks

I was in command of *Swallow* were among the happiest I have been for years.”

Henri chimed in by saying he was concerned about losing a good captain for *Swallow*. Richard agreed. I pointed out that David had already addressed that issue. They both nodded. I turned to David.

“It seems that an opportunity is presenting itself. What do you think?”

“You mean the opportunity to take over from Mr. Brown as skipper of *Rosie*?”

I inclined my head.

“I think I would need to spend time on *Rosie* with Mr. Brown, Peg Jones, and the other officers before either party should come to a decision about that.”

Isaiah smiled and said, “Well done, a good response. I will arrange it.”

David suggested that he would like to accompany Mr. Brown to the boatyard to carry out an inspection of the work planned for *Rosie*. Skipper was happy to agree. We then turned our attentions back to *Swallow*. After some further discussion, Henri and Richard suggested that we three partners should meet with J.B. to discuss his possible appointment as skipper of *Swallow*. If he was willing and the partners were happy, we could discuss officers and crew. I did remind them that that was the prerogative of the captain. At the end of the meeting, I met separately with Richard. I was upset I had not managed to get to Cape Ann to drop off supplies. Richard understood my predicament and my decision to return directly to England. I said I wanted to go and see the Patriarch. I felt he would appreciate it if I gave him a first-hand account of what I had experienced in Bermuda. Richard agreed. The Dorchester Company could do with learning from the experience of others. He was worried that they were tending to shoot blind, they didn’t know the conditions and the challenges, which was why my eye-witness accounts were so important.

“Richard, I am not leaving Plymouth until Annie has successfully borne our child—in less than two weeks I’m told.”

“That should be fine. I am due back in Weymouth next week. I will go to Dorchester and provide Reverend White with a summary. I think there is a meeting of the Dorchester Company soon. I will confirm the date and let you know. If convenient for you, it would be useful to have you attend.”

The next morning, clear with no wind, the sun low in the East but bright, the new snow sparkling on the ground, Skipper, David, and I met at the boatyard to inspect *Rosie*. She had been hauled up a slipway. Out of the water she appeared enormous. We spent a sobering and dirty two hours inspecting *Rosie*, inside and out. The hull had already been scraped clean of barnacles and weed, so we could get a good look at the condition of the planking and keel. There was clear evidence of rot beginning to set in on a small portion of the hull planking. The keel needed work as well. The rudder would probably need to be replaced. Inside, the hull frames appeared solid. One or two areas of weakness. Skipper and David were deep into technical discussions about futtocks, knees, sleepers, and Neptune knows what else. It was over my head, but they were patient. Seems knees are brackets attached to the hull frames to provide support for the decks, futtocks are the curved hull frames, and sleepers are the heavy, horizontal planking covering the inside of the lower hull. Where they had concerns they pointed to the offending item. There weren't too many, but all needed to be dealt with. We continued our inspection on the lower deck. Mostly sound, but some of the mechanical gear showed significant wear, notably the pumps and the capstan partners. In the gunroom we were able to take a closer look at the rudder and the cabling for the wheel. It confirmed what we had seen in our external inspection—the whole assembly needed to be replaced. We continued to examine *Rosie* from stem to stern. By the time we finished Skipper felt comfortable he would be able to discuss the report and estimates of the findings from the survey done by the boatyard. David, to my surprise, seemed unperturbed by the amount of work that needed to be done. He said that in his experience with a boat of the age of *Rosie* he had expected much more. The two of us walked

away from the boatyard and stopped off at a local tavern for some lunch and a tankard. I asked him what his thoughts were.

“Isaac, I would love to take over as Skipper of *Rosie*. However, I want to ease into that decision gently. Skipper Brown needs to let go on his own terms. I will not push him.”

We talked about *Rosie* after her refit. I described John Gorges’ concerns about trade with France and the issues of pirates in the Bay of Biscay. We ruminated on trading with Bilbao and Malaga as part of a fleet, for mutual protection. I brought up my past idea of an arrangement with the pirates, convince them that trading with the Mercedarians in Malaga was in the pirates’ interest as it would provide the monks with financial assets to barter for captured sailors. David said he would think further about it all and would come back to me with his ideas. *Rosie* would be a month or more at the yard, there was time to come up with a plan.

That afternoon, Henri, Richard, and I met with J.B. The meeting went well. J.B. was keen to assume command of *Swallow*. He had been given plenty of leeway by David on our journey to and from Bermuda and he said he felt confident about his abilities. He answered searching questions from Richard without any hesitation. After J.B. was asked to step outside to allow us to reach our conclusions, Henri, who had said little during the meeting, announced that he was comfortable with Mr. Braddock. He had watched him closely, observing his demeanor and how he carried himself. He gave him high marks. Richard nodded in agreement. I was already prepared to give J.B. command so without further ado, so we called him back in and I informed him of his new position, effective immediately. He was delighted. We then talked about crew. J.B. politely but firmly suggested that he would deal with that. He would be pleased to inform us of the appointments and recruitment he had made once completed. I smiled and enquired how long that might be. He said not long, he had an abundance of crew from the Bermuda trip from which to form the basis. He had already reached conclusions about the relative merits of individuals he would want.

In mock surprise, I responded, “J.B., are you saying you had already assumed you would be *Swallow*’s next skipper?”

He grinned.

“My conclusions I would have been happy to pass on to whoever was appointed.”

Henri opened a bottle of wine and we toasted the new skipper and *Swallow*.

I returned home, satisfied that the day had been well spent. That evening after the children were in bed, I asked Annie about her fast approaching confinement. How was she feeling?

“Husband mine. I feel incredibly well. The kicks from the sproglet are gentle. I suspect it must be a girl. Sarah came by this morning and did all that midwives are supposed to do at this late stage. She was pleased with my condition.”

“And if it is a girl, what do we call her?”

“I will not tempt fate. Let’s wait till the child is with us. We will be inspired as we look at the baby.”

“Fair enough.”

### **Journal entry**—*February 1625*

My whole attention for the ten days or so was on Annie, the children, and the coming event. Doctor Richard Vines was an occasional visitor. Annie had had such an uncomplicated birth with Abigail, she said having Doc Vines in attendance was unnecessary but I felt more comfortable with him available, having been an essential participant when Aby gave birth to James, a traumatic and difficult ordeal. Respecting Annie’s wishes, he stayed close but in the background.

The afternoon of 12 February, Annie went into labor. Sarah was called, Jeannie assisted, our bedroom was the birthing room, and I was banished. As with Abigail’s birth I took up residence at the Minerva, now with both James and Abigail. Alfred Potts outdid himself as landlord and proud uncle, soon to be great-uncle for the

second time. The children were spoilt by Alfred's staff and were tucked away in bed much too late, sleepy and content. Early the next morning, a knock on my bedroom door. Without waking the children, I slipped out, still clothed and ready. I ran to Whimple St. and was met at the door by Jeannie, concerned.

"Jeannie, what's wrong?"

"Sarah says the baby is stuck, the baby is trying to come out backwards. Annie is in great distress and has asked for you."

I ran upstairs to the bedroom. Sarah and Doc Vines were there, Annie was in great pain and moaning. I sat next to her and stroked her head. She looked up and smiled before screwing her eyes tight shut and shuddering. Sarah told her to breathe deeply as she worked.

"Push, Annie," she said, "that's my girl. Now, again."

Jeannie gave me a cool, wet cloth which I wiped over Annie's face and the back of her neck, massaging the tense muscles, trying to stay calm, trying to soothe, but panicking inside.

"Annie, push again. Keep pushing."

Then suddenly, with a rush, the baby, a girl, was born. Trembling with relief, I lifted Annie's head to my lap and gently caressed her face, wiping the sweat and tears away. She lay still, seemingly almost asleep. Her eyes opened and looked up at me.

"The relief from the pain is almost worth the experience. Isaac my love, thank you for being here. Now, where is my baby?"

With Annie settled, I went to spread the word to the rest of the family back at the Minerva. Dawn had broken, and the children were being given breakfast in the kitchen. I announced the good news and Alfred, who was cook for the occasion, gave a shout of joy which startled everyone. James was ready to go to Annie immediately, Abigail wanted to know all about the baby and what was her name?

"All in good time. Mummy needs to rest. We will go and visit her later. We do need to think of a good name for the baby, though."

So for the next hour or so we worked on names. Nothing suited all of us. Alfred's input was useful because he knew all the names

from Annie's side of the family. Even with his help we couldn't reach an agreement. No matter what we might have chosen, Annie would have the final say. A tired but happy Jeannie came and told us that Annie was awake and wanting to show off baby Miranda which was not a name we had thought of. As we walked home, we kept repeating it, softly, loudly, singing it and spelling it. By the time we arrived the name was fixed. Doc and Sarah had gone, everything neat and tidy, Annie reclining in bed, feeding Miranda. The children climbed onto the bed and sat either side staring at their sister. I stood back in deep contentment watching the scene as Annie introduced the baby to them.

The next ten days went quickly. I had a note from P., who had met with Richard. The next meeting of the Dorchester Company was planned for Monday, 28 February and P. requested my presence. I sent a note back saying I would be there and telling him of Miranda's birth, mother and daughter doing well. Annie was up and about within two days, back to normal within a week. Miranda, a dark mop covering her head, her grey-green eyes, so like Annie's, alert to every movement. She was quick to demand food. Annie's breasts, previously full and proud, now had enlarged enough to feed a proverbial army. Miranda was well taken care of. At night, in bed, Annie would cuddle up behind me, and by morning, the back of my night-shirt would be soaked with her milk. I became used to the regular feeding through the night. We would take it in turns to fetch Miranda from her crib every couple of hours and return her full and sleepy. We found that with three children and Jeannie, 15 Whimple St. was becoming crowded. We needed an extra bedroom. Annie told me to leave such matters to her while I was in Dorchester. As we lay in bed together, she sighed.

"My darling man. Do you know that these past two weeks you have not left my side, except to run errands? I can't remember when that last happened. We must make a habit of it."



## — CHAPTER 34 —

I planned to ride Maddie to Dorchester, the weather seemed benign, cold and clear. We left bright and early on Thursday 24 February. I followed the coastal route as the onshore winds had kept the roads passable and had been informed that there was deep snow on the moors inland. I felt alive and free, guilt at such a disloyal thought, resolved by accepting the moment, riding my much loved and faithful Maddie with the chance to work through the imponderables of my current life. I was certain that P. would be wanting me to go back to New England to complete the journey I had agreed to make after Bermuda and was torn between wanting to settle with my family and missing the adventure and excitement. The three days it took me to reach Dorchester left me still undecided. Not many travelers, the benign weather had not lasted. The last day, Maddie and I had to push through heavy snowfall and strong winds. Luckily we both knew the way, as visibility was poor.

I had sent a note to Jeremiah Gosling at the Sun to expect me the night of the 27th. It had been close to nine months since I was last there with Annie. After arriving and settling Maddie, to the bar for a welcome hot drink and a satisfying meal. Jeremiah was keen to hear all my news. Eventually, sleepy from the journey, the amount of ale I had consumed and the heavy meal, I dragged myself off to bed and slept soundly and dreamlessly till morning light.

A quick breakfast and I walked into Dorchester to Will and Eleanor Whiteway's house. They had been advised of my arrival, he

being an investor in the Dorchester Company. I wanted to catch up with him before the meeting, which was to take place in the Free School that afternoon. Elenor wanted to know the whole episode of Miranda's birth, after which she left us, happy that mother and daughter were well. I handed over the latest batch of my journal to Will, who had great difficulty constraining himself from delving into it on the spot. I needed to understand what the current situation was with the Dorchester Company. Will said there were issues. Under Sir Walter Erle's Governorship, the Company now had 121 members, money had been raised to buy small trading vessels to keep the Cape Ann settlement supplied and to ship back what were expected to be large quantities of fish. Unfortunately, to date, the returns had not been great.

Underlying the commercial issues was the influence P. had wielded in the selection of a significant number of the members. There were some twenty clergymen, all Puritan in their beliefs. Among the lay members there were several who shared a strong Puritan attitude, thereby creating something of a schism between those who saw the Cape Ann settlement as a commercial venture and those who saw it as the first of many non-Separatist Puritan settlements to be established in Massachusetts and supported by the Dorchester Company. Finally, the Separatists in New Plimouth had caused issues in London. Isaac Allerton had returned to London and obtained some kind of patent which purported to give the Separatists proprietorial rights to Cape Ann. A fishing stage had been erected before the Cape Ann settlement was established, but was seemingly abandoned when our settlers arrived there, and now the Separatists were demanding access. Without strong leadership in Cape Ann, the Separatists might get their way.

I lunched with Will and Elenor, after which Will and I walked over to the Free School. I was met by P. who embraced me and wished Annie well. He said he had praised and thanked the Lord in church at the matins service the previous day, on the return of James and the birth of Miranda. P. asked that when the meeting started

he would be grateful if I waited in Mr. Cheeke's office until called to give an account and answer questions. I was shown to the office and met Mr. Cheeke for the first time in many years. My old school-teacher had aged considerably, looking older than his 50 years and was courteous, wishing me well. He had become a member of the company and said he looked forward to hearing my latest adventures. P. and Cheeke disappeared to attend the meeting while I sat with the memories of my school days flooding back. Cheeke's office had been rebuilt as a replica of the original. It was similar enough to bring to mind all the times I was called to be beaten for infractions, misbehavior, bad homework, poor memory of the Latin prose I had been required to learn. I thought the cane he had on his desk was the same one that I had felt so many times, but it must have been destroyed with the rest of the school in the fire. My mind continued to wander through the memories of over half my lifetime ago. Aby made a gentle appearance with other faces fading in and out of view.

When I was called into the meeting, I had to shake myself to return to the present. I was greeted by Sir Walter Erle, the Governor of the Company who introduced me to the assembly. There must have been about 50 members present, several I knew. Richard Bushrode was there and waved a greeting, but otherwise stayed in the background. Sir Walter summarized my trips to New England and the work I had done for Sir Ferdinando Gorges. He led the assembly to believe I was an expert on all matters New England, at the end of which I felt I had to speak up.

"Sir Walter, you speak kind words for which I thank you but I am no expert, I have had a number of experiences which gives me some advantage, only."

Mr. Cheeke then muttered, "*In regione caecorum rex est luscus.*"

I nodded, as did the clergy present. A voice demanded to know what was being said. Mr. Cheeke responded, "In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king."

Sir Walter asked me to give an account of my journey to Bermuda and then answer questions that might be raised. I explained that I

had known little of Bermuda, otherwise known as the Somers Isles, before my adventure began. I provided a brief narrative of the reasons I went, my attempts at brevity came to naught. There was a general fascination about the kidnapping and our search and I had to separate my account into two sections—one about the rescuing of James, the other, a description of the Bermuda settlement, its history and my observations of its success and failures, followed by a summary of what might be learnt. I went over the same ground I had covered with the Gorges but in much greater detail. Some of those present had some experience of Bermuda, at least indirectly. Questions were highly relevant and demanded careful and in some cases prolonged responses. The result, after over two hours of presentation, was a fairly complete description of my experiences. Sir Walter asked me for my conclusions.

“Strong, trustworthy leadership is paramount. People need to know the rules by which they must live and know that no one is exempt from those rules. Settlers must be given land to work to their own advantage. Family units provide stability and build community. The settlement that consists of those communities should be self-governing. The Governor needs to represent the interests of the settlers back to the absent investors. Slavery is a bad practice, not only is it morally wrong, in my opinion, it leads to unrest and social division which causes instability. Using settlements as a dumping ground for wastrels and ne’er do wells has a destabilizing effect, solving a social problem in England results in the creation of a much worse problem in the settlement.”

P. asked about the role of faith in providing leadership.

“Well, sir. I am a lay person and do not, therefore, have quite the same concerns that you and your fellow clergy might have. But, irrespective of the role of the church, there must be a commercial component. The settlement ultimately can only survive if it is able to support itself. If the settlement is driven by investors looking for a return on their investment, then the focus must be on producing the wherewithal to provide that return. If, on the other hand, the

settlement is seen as a refuge from religious intolerance and the financial support is given to that end, the commercial pressure is lessened but still not removed.”

Sir Walter asked, “Mr. Stanfield you have visited New Plimouth a number of times. What say you about that settlement? It seems they practice much of what you recommend.”

“Sir Walter, they do but they wear their Separatism on their sleeve. They are fierce in their absolute commitment to their particular dogma. They allow no independence of thought and it does not lend itself to a happy or comfortable communion with other less dogmatic settlements. One potential benefit has been the disbursement of disaffected or unwelcome members of their settlement. This has resulted, and will continue to result, in new settlements around Massachusetts Bay.”

I was asked about the state of religion in Bermuda. I responded that there were four active parishes, each with a church, although one was currently without a minister as far as I knew. The official religion was Anglican but the ministers apparently mostly leant towards Puritanism.

“How important is the church’s role in the settlement?”

“I believe, very. The minister I spent time with was seen and appreciated as the shepherd of his flock. He not only provided spiritual guidance and comfort, he represented the interests of his parishioners back to the Government authorities. A shared faith brought the community together, humanity and compassion rather than iron discipline.”

P. smiled. “Isaac. I feel your personal attitudes are beginning to influence your admirable observations.”

I smiled and there was general laughter. Sir Walter asked if there were any more questions for me. There weren’t and he thanked me for my time. The assembly broke for a few minutes to allow the members to stretch their legs. I was accompanied from the meeting by P.

“Isaac, that was invaluable and sobering, quite masterful in the telling, and we are all deeply grateful to you. It will be interesting to

hear the views of the members when we reconvene. I want you to come to dine with me tonight, I will invite Will. I doubt the assembly will be finished before 6:00, so we will expect you at the rectory at 7:30.”

With that he left me. I returned to the Sun. I needed to quench my thirst and have a rest, I found I was quite exhausted. When I returned to the rectory I was met at the door by Mrs. White who gave me a huge embrace.

“Dear Isaac. Your life is etched on your face, what a journey you have made since you lived with us as an irrepressible schoolboy. Welcome, welcome, it is so good to see you.”

She showed me into their formal receiving room where a fire blazed in the large hearth and a number of people had gathered. Will was there and I was struck by his happy demeanor. When we were together, irrespective of who else was present, we were like schoolboys. So it was that night, I laughed out loud and we embraced. P. looked startled and then recognized the reason, he laughed too.

“Ah, true friendship, the destroyer of all pretense and affectation.”

To my surprise Sir Walter was present, as was Robert Cheeke and Richard Bushrode. Sir Walter approached me.

“Mr. Stanfield, the Company owes you a debt which we will find it difficult to repay. I was enthralled by your account, both accounts. The rescue of your child was the stuff of storybooks, breathtaking. However, your experiences in New England and latterly in Bermuda have been extraordinary. We have been so fortunate to have been the recipient of your eloquent description of your experiences and the accuracy of your observations. It does, unfortunately, expose our lamentable lack of understanding and preparedness in our efforts to establish a settlement.”

P. proffered me a glass of wine which I accepted with thanks. Sir Walter raised his glass.

“Mr. Stanfield, a glass of wine with you, sir.”

I was touched and could no more than raise my glass to him and we each partook. He then turned to a gentleman I had not met before.

“John, let me introduce you to the man of hour, Isaac Stanfield. Isaac, this is my good friend John Humphrey. He is the Treasurer of the Dorchester Company. An important person, especially in the financial straits we are experiencing.”

We shook hands and Mr. Humphrey said a few kind words, but was clearly a worried man. Mr. Cheeke came up and greeted me.

“Young Isaac. Perhaps not so young, now. I have to say that I am delighted that what we managed to beat into you has stood you well. You have made me proud. You spoke from great experience and absolute sincerity and honesty, and have made much of the membership uncomfortable.”

I was quite overcome. It took a somewhat ribald comment from Will to bring me back to earth, there were one or two chuckles and we all relaxed. Mrs. White called us to dinner.

The conversation was general until we had finished eating. Then the brandy was circulated and P. asked Sir Walter to comment on the debate that took place after I had left.

“It did take a while for the conversation to pick up. The information that Isaac, if I might be so bold to call you thus, provided was overwhelming. For the first time we felt we had a definitive list of the criteria we had to follow if we have any chance of success. There were many who were disheartened. I wonder if it is all coming a little late.”

“Sir Walter, pardon my interruption, but when I came back from my last trip to New England and Cape Ann, I understood there to be some considerable concern about the long term viability of the settlement. Since then, more settlers have been sent out with new leadership. Has anything happened to address the concerns of the Company?”

“Isaac, you cut to the quick. The members remain concerned. We have sent vessels over to Cape Ann to gather the fish that we hoped had been caught and dried in abundance, as well as other produce. Our hopes have been dashed, repeatedly. Poor returns both in terms of quality and quantity. It is difficult to persuade our members

to continue to provide financial support under such circumstances. What you have been able to do is clarify what we should have done.”

I asked what had been done to secure better leadership. Mr. Roger Conant had been mentioned as a possible candidate. I was told that it had been agreed that he should be approached. Mr. Humphrey was given the task of writing to him at Nantasket to ask him to undertake the management of the Cape Ann settlement. I felt that there was a sense of expectation in the room, something that hung over the conviviality, a waiting. I looked across the table at Will and raised my eyebrows. He caught my questioning look, turned to P. and whispered something to him, who nodded and turned to me.

“Isaac, a motion was placed before the membership at the conclusion of the meeting, and after much discussion it was approved. That motion stated that you be asked to travel to Cape Ann at your early convenience to investigate the situation out there and report your findings back to the Company.”

There was an almost palpable and common reaction from everyone, as if they had all been holding their breath. I thought a moment. Was this a final effort to rescue the situation? Was I being held to a level of expectation beyond my capability? I looked around at the faces all turned to me awaiting a response. I cleared my throat.

“Well sir, gentlemen, you do me an honor which I hardly warrant.”

I paused, picking my words.

“You have me at a disadvantage. I am mindful that I had promised to travel on to Cape Ann after Bermuda, if at all possible. I am mindful that I have heard not one word of reproach from anyone that I had failed to live up to that promise. For which I thank you all.”

I was thinking furiously, playing for time. What would Annie say? I was stuck.

“There are matters that I need to attend to which prevent me from making a commitment now. Let me consider your request and I will respond as soon as I am able to?”

The dinner and meeting broke up shortly thereafter. Sir Walter and John Humphreys wanted to meet me when the time was right



to discuss the situation further, and I said I would be happy to. I told P. I was anxious to return to Plymouth and would be leaving at dawn the following day and begged to be excused. He embraced me, wished me well, and looked forward to seeing me soon. The most important thing, he said, was to make a decision, either way, and not leave the matter hanging, both for their benefit as well as my own. I promised him I would let him know as soon as I knew myself. I returned to the Sun, accompanied a part of the way by Will.

“Isaac, my dear friend, I should not be surprised. I have avidly read your journals, seen your extraordinary progress towards maturity. But reading is different from witnessing. I saw tonight what you have become. I am in awe, proud to be your friend.”

At his door, we parted with great affection and I plodded on through the snow and darkness to the Sun and a lonely bed.

— CHAPTER 35 —

**Journal entry**—*March 1625*

It was a soggy, cold ride to Plymouth. I pushed Maddie hard, returning on the same road we had travelled earlier, arriving home Thursday evening, 3 March back to my family. After the children were abed, Annie and I sat close holding hands in front of the kitchen hearth. I told her about the meeting. She asked many pertinent questions but became still when I described how the Company asked me to go back to Cape Ann. She looked hard at me as I told her my response. After a long silence, she stared into the fire. I said nothing but squeezed her hand, and eventually I received an answering squeeze. A sigh, she turned and kissed me.

“Isaac, my love, I’m sorry. That was a disloyal reaction. I was disappointed, to be fair I feared as much when you left. It was a forlorn hope. I do so miss you when you are away, too many months with little contact and many dangers. I lie in bed at night trying to imagine what you are up to, worrying about the calamities that might have overtaken you. I have loved you for twelve years and have spent much of that time separated from you.”

“Annie, love, I have not made the decision yet. I feel I am duty bound to go, but my heart and, increasingly, my head are sounding caveats. I need some time to sort out all these doubts and I can’t bear to cause you any pain.”

She studied my face and her fingers traced the scars. She smiled.

“You are who you are and I wouldn’t change one fingernail. On the other hand, I might change a few of the blemishes.”

We went to bed. A long and deeply satisfying coming together. It had been many months. Eventually, we slept till a hungry cry called from the crib beside the bed.

Next morning, the day bright, after breakfast Jeannie took James and Abigail to play with friends. Miranda was asleep. Annie wanted to talk to me about what was on her mind. She was becoming restless and did not want to spend the rest of her days being only a housewife and mother, she wanted to be out and about. Being busy, doing interesting things, especially if I was going to continue to be away for long periods of time. A more immediate concern was the house. I asked her if it could it be modified further.

“Isaac, I don’t know if we have enough room. We have a fine, large, dry cellar but only used for storage, firewood and so on, with the cellar stairwell shelves used for cold storage of food. With a much larger family, having our laundry sent out is expensive and not practical. Perhaps we can install a laundry and drying room down there, we would need running water and a drain. On the ground floor, when we added the dining room, we created a room which we haven’t actually used, nor do we use the withdrawing room. If we entertained more it would be different.”

“Let’s talk about your other concerns. You don’t want to be stuck at home all day.”

Annie described her daily routine. It was one, she admitted, most of her married friends followed. She said she was fortunate to have Jeannie. Once Miranda was weaned, Jeannie would be fully occupied with the three children. We needed someone to take over the housekeeping, and it would help if that person was a really good cook, too, which would leave Annie free an hour or two a day to join with friends who helped at St. Andrew’s Church, cleaning, doing the flowers, visiting the sick in the parish, helping the indigent, and many other activities. It would make my absences more bearable, working,

looking after others rather than moping at home, and more active engagement socially would result in more entertaining. It made good sense as my own business activities required me to be more hospitable than I had been.

“Annie, you need to think about the consequences of becoming more engaged with the community and the parish. But, I agree with you, we should be entertaining more than we do.”

“My dear husband, that won’t be hard, since we don’t do any to speak of now.”

“Seriously, I love the idea of you out, doing good works. That visibility, as well as my embracing that as a social and, admittedly, business obligation will require us to have the capability to entertain. Is 15 Whimple St. capable of providing the space and facilities for us to do so?”

Annie sat back. A furrow appeared on her brow, she did not speak for an age. I was content to watch the wheels turning in her lovely head, the expressions on her face as she worked through each issue. The children got home, Miranda woke up, all returned to the chaos, confusion, and cheer of a happy family.

A note came from David Tremaine. He was down at the boatyard. After a noisy lunch, I slipped away to meet with him. I was told he was on board *Rosie*. I climbed a ladder and found him in the Great Cabin, he had papers strewn over the table. Isaiah had received the surveyor’s report on the work required on *Rosie* and he had discussed it with David that morning. He was in the process of calling a meeting of the owners. However, I knew Richard would not be back in Plymouth for several days. David went through the report with me. Nothing startling, one or two items that we had missed in our own survey, the estimated cost was about £100. It seemed high to me. David went through the figures, labor was the largest item and it all made sense with the explanations.

“David, I have to assume you have decided to accept the appointment?”

He smiled. “Skipper and I had a long conversation. It seems he is

as content as is possible for a man giving up his only begotten daughter and he blessed me when I said I would be honored to follow him as Master and Captain of *Rosie*.”

I rose and shook his hand, a bottle was opened, and we toasted him and *Rosie*. After which, we discussed my trip to Dorchester.

“David, I am worried, all the signs are that the Dorchester Company is unravelling. They are pinning their hopes on an ill-considered settlement, located in the wrong place, led by the wrong people without skilled and capable labor. The investors are disenchanted, more money is needed, yet they have received little or no returns so far. They are clutching at straws by wanting me to go there and somehow turn things round.”

David refilled my glass.

“Isaac, my old friend. I think rather that they want you to go there and assess the situation. They trust you to return with a completely honest report as to what should be done. Kill or cure. I don’t believe there is anyone else who has the experience and expertise to complete the task you have been set.”

I admitted that I had left Dorchester before I had the chance to review the meeting with P. I was sure that he and Richard Bushrode would have had a long discussion. When Richard returned to Plymouth I, no doubt, would hear all about it. Then there was the request for a further meeting with Sir Walter Erle and John Humphrey. I raised the possibility of using *Rosie* to go to New England, subject to ensuring there was opportunity for profitable trade. David laughed and said he would bear it in mind.

I then asked him about crew. He pulled out a list of current crew members. Skipper Brown had inspired incredible loyalty among his crew, which meant they had served with him for many years and were becoming somewhat long in the tooth. Two men stood out, Pete Couch and Tiny Hadfield. They had risen through the ranks. Skipper had promoted Pete to be second mate and Tiny to be bosun, several years ago. With Peg planning to retire with Skipper, Pete was a likely first mate. David had a number of old colleagues he was in

touch with. He was looking for a second mate, gunner, and carpenter, since Mr. Babbs and Chips Cowling respectively, had retired. He wanted some more experienced crew, especially a bosun's mate. The perennial Dusty Cattigan seemed as fit as ever and wanted to continue to serve as cook and doctor. David seemed confident he would have the crew sorted out over the next week or two.

I went to see Mr. Scroud. I gave him a summary of my meeting in Dorchester. He was typically morose about the commercial value to me of my possible trip. He was even more dismissive when I suggested we might use *Rosie*.

"Mr. Stanfield, I must advise you that the *Sweet Rose* is old and should not be considered for transatlantic voyages. She is best suited for trade with continental Europe."

I informed him that the estimate to bring *Rosie* into prime condition was about £100. I had to prove to him that the amount of labor required warranted the cost. He sniffed and said that as a 51% shareholder, my portion of that was covered by the profit from my Bermuda trip, so all was not lost. To change the subject, I mentioned that I was concerned about whether 15 Whimble St. fit our future needs. Mr. Scroud told me to leave the thought with him.

Monday, 7 March, Richard Bushrode returned to Plymouth. I invited him to the house that afternoon and met in our withdrawing room, as far from the family bustle as possible. He said that there had been continued discussion among the steering committee members of the Dorchester Company, the committee they called, rather grandly, New England Planters Parliament. It had been agreed that the Cape Ann settlement should continue to be supported for the time being and Roger Conant was being offered the position of Governor. The existing settlers would continue to be supported, for humanity's sake at the least. Small trading vessels would be sent with supplies in the hope that fish, pelts, or any other commodity might be brought back in payment. Conant was not expected to take up his position until the late summer or early autumn, and it was felt that the ideal time for me to go would be in October. I would be able to

review the situation there and return to England before the winter set in. I realized that I had to make my decision.

“Richard, I have to tell you that I am very conflicted about going back.”

“Why so?”

“One the one hand, I feel obligated to do so, having created the expectation that I would go there from Bermuda. On the other hand, I find it difficult to justify the effort and expense.”

Richard nodded and said he had similar concerns but felt the need to support the desires of the Dorchester Company.

“Isaac, I’m a businessman. I see any project in terms of a value to be gained offset by the cost. The value has to be calculated or estimated as precisely as possible, both tangible and intangible, in order to calculate an acceptable gain over the calculated cost.”

“What do you mean by ‘intangible?’”

“I believe the group of clergymen who are members of the Company have a loud voice in wanting the Dorchester Company to continue. Although there are only about twenty of them, they are unified against the many conflicting opinions of the rest. They are shameless about invoking the ‘Will of God’ on their side.”

I nodded and asked, “How does one place a monetary value on their priorities for establishing godliness and the conversion of the Indian?”

Richard shook his head and I continued.

“All the signs point to the almost certain failure of the Cape Ann settlement. My, or anyone else’s, visit purely to confirm that expectation, seems a waste of time and effort.”

I surprised myself as well as Richard by being so emphatic. I reminded him that I had been asked to make a six-week sea voyage to observe over a week or so and another six-week voyage back. I wasn’t being asked to make changes that might affect the outcome. How, therefore, do I assess the value of that effort?

“Isaac, you are right. You going to Cape Ann will not affect the outcome, nor will it change the minds of the key investors. Your very

thorough report to the Dorchester Company was compelling and convincing. I feel you have made your decision, even if your sense of duty is not allowing you to accept it.”

Rather than acknowledge he was right, I asked about the possibility of using *Rosie*. He was doubtful, there didn't seem to be the business opportunity which further confirmed the inadvisability of making the journey. Tacitly, we agreed to change the subject.

We discussed the current state of our fleet, *Rosie* and *Swallow*. I told him David Tremaine had accepted our offer and was now at the boatyard watching *Rosie's* repair with an eagle eye. We needed to get *Rosie* back in the water and trading. J.B., on *Swallow*, was already engaged in establishing and supplying services. John Gorges, true to his word, was becoming a major client. In addition, Henri Giradeau found *Swallow* to be an ideal means to distribute smaller consignments of the wines and brandy that he had imported to Plymouth in bulk, to his clients along the South coast. As Richard was preparing to leave, I told him I would contact Sir Walter Erle and John Humphrey and let them know my decision not to go, at least on this planned expedition, thanking Richard for helping me clarify my thoughts. He smiled and said it was no surprise and congratulated me on making the right decision.

On Tuesday, Mr. Scroud wished to see me and I went to meet him at his office. The owner of the house next to us, 17 Whimple St., was on his death bed. The house, attached to ours, was empty and not yet on the market. The family had no interest in the house, they lived in Somerset and favored a quick sale. Its value was being appraised. Might this be a solution to our need for a larger house? We could combine the two into a substantial residence. After a lengthy discussion I said I would discuss the opportunity with Annie and returned home. On hearing the news, Annie thought for a while before responding,

“If we go back to our earlier conversation before Mr. Scroud's intervention, we have the rooms but they are in the wrong places. We need to be creative about finding a way to use all the rooms and find



a space for a room for you to have as your office. Then we don't need to buy a whole additional house."

I nodded. Annie had, clearly, something else on her mind. I asked her what she was thinking about.

"The idea of buying the house next door has awakened a feeling that has been growing in my mind. I have lived in Plymouth since I was a teenager, brought here by the lure of a job at Uncle Alfred's tavern. Now I have a family with three young children. I worry about how unhealthy Plymouth is for the children, dirt, noise, smell, the risk of disease. I have happy memories of my childhood, playing in the fields, in the woods, on the water, learning about birds, their singing, insects, the wildflowers, the animals that were everywhere."

"Annie, I have similar memories of my childhood. Further, it reminded me of the conversations and experiences I have had with the Indians about how unnatural is the way of life we live tightly packed into unhealthy cities. By unnatural, I mean divorced from nature."

For a long time Annie stayed silent.

"Isaac, my dear husband. You might not remember but I was born and brought up in Upwey."

I had forgotten.

"Upwey, near Dorchester? I have old friends who lived in Upwey. Did you know the Sprague family?"

Annie nodded.

"My mother worked in the kitchens for the Spragues. I would sometimes help. I was friendly with Alice, the oldest child. She was my age. She had five brothers, Ralph being the next oldest."

I thought back. Ralph Sprague was Will's age, we had been school-friends, one of the gang. With Will, we spent the days and evenings out of school roaming the countryside. He had come to stay with P. when I was living there. I lost touch with him after leaving Dorchester. I wondered what happened to him.

"Anyway, I have always wanted to return to Upwey one day. It was a lovely place for a child to grow up."

"Annie, I came to work in Plymouth because Sir Ferdinando

offered me a job. No other reason. I was born and raised in or near Dorchester, I too had a country upbringing.”

We both settled back and considered the possibilities. The more I thought about it the more I realized that there was little to keep me in Plymouth, especially knowing how Annie felt. Sir F. no longer required my services, I was still connected to New England through Dorchester and P. More than that, P. needed me to help him as he battled the conflicting interests in the Dorchester Company and his attempts to build sustainable settlements in New England. With that in mind, I wrote and told him of my decision not to go to New England, explained the reasons, and asked him to let Sir Walter Erle and John Humphrey know with my deep apologies. I said I hoped to be in Dorchester soon to discuss it in more detail.

It seemed it was time to transfer the basis for my New England pre-occupation from Plymouth to Dorchester. For that matter, my business could be managed from Weymouth as easily, if not more easily, than from Plymouth. In fact, I would have preferred to have had *Rosie's* repair down at her old yard in Weymouth, *Rosie's* home port. Both Richard and Isaiah were based in Weymouth and even *Swallow* was as much in Weymouth as anywhere else. I thought about Mr. Scroud. I would need to talk to him if we moved, but I imagined he could continue to manage my business interests from Plymouth, and I knew that he had a corresponding agent in Weymouth.

I discussed my thoughts with Annie. After which we went back into our separate contemplations of the consequences of such a move. We agreed we needed to continue to think about it for a few days then work out a methodical process for reaching a firm conclusion. One thing we did agree on, we would not be buying 17 Whimple St. I wondered how long it might have been before we got round to thinking of moving from Plymouth if the possibility of buying it had not arisen.

## — CHAPTER 36 —

Over the next weeks, Annie and I collected our thoughts and by the time we had finished talking to business associates and friends, it became clear that there was little to keep us in Plymouth. Annie would miss her friends, but now that they all had their own families and lives the connections she used to have were not as strong. Based on our memories and knowledge of the area, we decided that we would like to live between Weymouth and Dorchester on or near the Ridgeway between Upwey to the west and Bincombe to the east, close to or in a village near the parish church. Annie wanted to be part of a community, a house with an acre or two of land, she wanted to grow food and have chickens, and accommodation at least what we had currently. I suggested we leave the children with Jeannie and ride to Dorchester and then have a look round and find assistance to act for us in a proper search.

In spite of our excitement, it was early May before we were able to get away. On the 27th of March, King James died. There were services of remembrance and a period of mourning that curtailed normal activity, followed by the celebrations marking the coronation of King Charles.

*Rosie* was relaunched mid-April. Isaiah had some difficulty letting go and until he did Peg Jones stayed. As major shareholder, I had to pull rank to persuade Isaiah to stand down and David was officially appointed Skipper. He immediately asked Isaiah to assist him in preparing *Rosie* for sea and to undergo sea trials, an invitation graciously

accepted. Through David's contacts, he had come up with a plan to reopen the Malaga market with the Mercedarian monks. However, he said he needed time to organize a meeting involving ship owners and traders. He would be ready by the time I returned from my house hunting.

### **Journal entry—*May 1625***

Monday 2 May, we bid fond farewell to James and Abigail. Miranda came with us, strapped into a canvas harness resting on Annie's breast. We said we would be gone for ten days. Bright blue skies with high, slow moving, white, wispy clouds above and multi-hues of green fields and woods below, a warm, gentle breeze from the south, a good to be alive, late spring day. Maddie and Tess were frisky with the pleasure of being out and away. We rode our favorite coastal route in easy stages sharing the good company of fellow travelers and made for Dorchester and the Sun. Jeremiah had been alerted, as had Will and P., but not the reasons. Evening of 5 May we were shown our usual bedroom with a cradle prepared for Miranda. It was good for Annie to be with me back in familiar, much-loved haunts. Next day we visited Elenor and Will and told them, to their evident delight, why we were in Dorchester. He gave me an update on Ralph Sprague, married to Joanna Warren in August 1623, with a child born in 1624, living in Fordington. Will said that our old friend had become something of a Puritan, he implied perhaps a little too much for his taste. He said that Ralph had remained close to P., who would be able to tell me more.

P. had written back to me saying he understood the reasons I decided not to go to Cape Ann this year. He would let Sir Walter know. He acknowledged that my reasoning was sound. He was delighted at the idea that we would be moving back from Plymouth and agreed to organize a lunch for the next day, Saturday, and invite Ralph and Joanna, together with Will and Elenor Whiteway. He said the

Spragues were a fine young couple, Ralph was an active member of the parish and a great support to P. and would be a useful contact to help in the search for our new home. Born and raised in Upwey, he would know where to look and who to talk to.

That afternoon, we visited Holy Trinity Church in Bincombe, leaving Miranda with the doting Elenor. The Reverend Stoddard, to my comfort, was still the rector there. We talked about Johnny Dawkins, a sad story. His wife, Rebecca, had died in childbirth, the child stillborn. He worked for his father-in-law on his farm and it had become difficult. Johnny felt suffocated living in his wife's family, too many memories. His indifferent relationship with them no longer tempered by his adored wife, he had become an unhappy, withdrawn individual. We explained our reasons to Reverend Stoddard for coming to see him. He asked what we were looking for and said he would pass the word. He suddenly slapped his forehead.

"I'm becoming an old fool. There is a house that is available nearby, owned by a church warden and member of my parish council whose wife died a year ago. He is leaving to live with his daughter in Weymouth. Would you like to see it?"

Annie said we would be delighted and so we went. The house was built of stone with a thatched roof on a lane that separated it from the churchyard. There was a large walled garden behind the house, a stable with an enclosed yard and four stalls, leading to a field. The front wall of the house was directly on the lane with a gabled front door that opened into a small hallway, reception rooms and a kitchen, upstairs three bedrooms. It was a bit small, however, it gave us a taste for the sort of home we might be looking for. We thanked Reverend Stoddard and said he would let it be known that a "fine young family", as he put it, was seeking to move to the area.

That evening, over a meal at the Sun, we discussed our needs with Jeremiah, who promised to keep his eyes and ears open. Annie and I went to bed satisfied that we had cast a wide net and hopeful something would turn up that was a perfect fit for our needs. We agreed that we should set off for Plymouth first thing on Sunday. We had

lunch at P.'s with the Whiteways, Ralph and Joanna Sprague. I was pleased to meet up with Ralph again, we both agreed it had been too long. Ralph remembered Annie's mother, a kindly lady, he said, and had a fleeting memory of Annie. With P.'s benign encouragement, Ralph talked with increasing heat of the concerns he had about the religious intolerance of the church towards Puritanism. It was clear he was drawn to the possibility of emigrating. Annie managed to get him focused on opportunities for us to acquire property. He told us about a property in West Stafford, a mile or two east of Dorchester, a large, four-bedroom house with reception rooms, large kitchen, stabling, and extensive grounds. Ralph accompanied us later that afternoon to look at it, no more than a 20 minute ride away. The house was everything Ralph had described but seemed a little grand. With that in mind, he promised to keep a look out for an appropriate property.

We were back in Plymouth by Wednesday evening and pleased to be reunited with our family. They had had an adventurous week which James described to us in great detail, abetted by Abigail. Miranda just gurgled happily in her mother's arms.

### **Journal entry—*June 1625***

Will wrote to tell us their daughter Mary had died of a fever, suddenly, on 5 June. Annie was heartbroken for Elenor. We sent our condolences and love. Life is precarious, Mary was only four years old. A blessing that Elenor was pregnant and expecting another child in December.

By mid-June matters outside our control were pushing us to consider an earlier departure from Plymouth. The situation in La Rochelle was worsening. The Duke of Buckingham, retaining the confidence of the new King, was preparing an army and fleet to intervene in the civil war between the Catholic authorities and the Huguenots of La Rochelle. Plymouth had been designated as the mustering point.

Soldiers and sailors were gathering under minimal control, poorly fed and left to wander. Annie was becoming increasingly concerned about the safety of our whole family. There were signs that disease was on the rise, and many feared that the overcrowding would bring back the plague. In light of the unruly situation in Plymouth, *Swallow* had been moved and her base of operations was now with *Rosie* in Weymouth. David sent a note saying that his ideas for trading with Malaga had hit a snag. Meantime, he had summer and autumn organized with a number of trading voyages. He hoped to see us when he could but Mr. Scroud should be able to provide all details of his activities, which sounded promising. Will said there were a number of rental opportunities for us to consider in the Dorchester area and Annie and I agreed that we should look at them. I sent Will a note asking him to find a suitable property and we would like to take possession as soon as possible.

By the end of June, Will had negotiated a one-year lease on the house we had checked out in Bincombe. John Gorges needed accommodation to billet senior officers, so he and Mr. Scroud reached agreement on the lease of 15 Whimble St., for a minimum period of one year from 1 August, 1625, John promising he would ensure the army were prompt with their payments and any damage to the property would be repaired. Annie took charge of packing up the house. I was either banished or employed as a heavy laborer and not permitted to voice my opinion, any questioning was considered insubordination. I quickly resigned myself to Annie's irresistible force. I came to enjoy the experience and loved my wife all the more.

### **Journal entry—July 1625**

We had decided to use *Swallow* to transfer the contents of our house, together with Annie, Jeannie, and the children to Weymouth. J.B. and Obi said they would take special care of this precious cargo. Annie stated that all would be ready to be moved dockside by wagon on

28 July. I left three days earlier, riding Maddie and leading Tess. My plan was to make for the King's Arms in Weymouth, where Will would meet me on the evening of 27 July. The King's Arms would be our base until we could all move into the Bincombe house. Excellent weather, unencumbered and with two horses to share the ride, I was able to meet Will as planned. He had arranged for wagons to be dockside 29 July to await the arrival of *Swallow*. On 28 July, Will and I rode to Bincombe, the house was empty, clean and tidy. We met the owner's agent and I completed the paperwork to our mutual satisfaction. Reverend Stoddard, who had kept himself apprised of the situation, came over to the house and welcomed us to his parish.

### **Journal entry—August 1625**

The next week was a chaotic but largely enjoyable time. We had plenty of help to install our possessions, furniture, and family. Johnny Dawkins appeared, having been advised of our arrival by the good rector. He had grown up and out, a fine young man, overborne with aching sadness. Annie, the eternal mother, reached out to him. We took great delight in hearing his adventures as an itinerant mummer, acting in Norwich. He talked movingly of his marriage and the joy of starting a family, all to be dashed. After he left us, Annie suggested we needed help to look after the large garden, stables, and a host of other things, and Johnny might be just the man. The Stanfield family attended our first matins at Holy Trinity. We were greeted and introduced from the pulpit. After the service, Annie was quickly drawn into a circle of young mothers. She felt at home almost immediately.

Annie and I were both happy that we had made the break from Plymouth and settled in a new home. She contacted Johnny and he was overjoyed to be offered the position of gardener and stableman. He found himself a room in the village and started working for us within a fortnight. In one of my increasingly frequent meetings with P., he mentioned in passing that my old friend Silas Beale had been



to see him. I was surprised. It had been a long time since we last met and I felt an immediate pang of guilt. Silas had heard that the Stanfields had returned to Dorset and he wanted to make contact with me. P. told me where to find him. He was pulling weeds in a vegetable patch behind a row of laborers' cottages beyond the West Gate. Dear God, the memories. Twelve years back, Aby and her father had rented one of these cottages after the Great Fire, where we loved for the first time. A sudden clear, golden image of her smiling at me, welcoming me—I nearly fell to my knees. The vision faded. Silas turned at my approach. We greeted each other fondly and I dragged him down to the Sun for an ale. Silas looked well, though he admitted to being well north of 50, bent but keen of eye and retaining a strong grip. We talked a long time. He had kept up with little pieces of news about me that were common currency. He had shed a tear over Aby's death. He had been away working in Cornwall when Annie and I were married. He was amazed at all my adventures. Eventually, we turned to his current circumstances. His mother had lived with his younger brother in the cottage where I had found Silas. The brother had died, Silas returned from Cornwall to look after her, and she had died recently. He had been allowed to stay in the cottage but was worried for how much longer. He said he worked as hard as ever, having regular jobs with a number of the Dorchester gentry, as he called them. Mostly gardening, house maintenance, exercising horses and the like. He said his life was good, he had a parcel of friends and was in good health. Gentle questioning uncovered a slightly less rosy situation. Although he had been gainfully employed, his current circumstances were a bit dire. As I listened to him, I thought how much I owed to this man, he had been my savior and mentor.

“Silas, how would you like to come to Bincombe and work for us?”

He was silent for a long time. After a pull from his tankard he slowly put it down.

“Isaac, I would like that much.”

Some time later I rode back to Annie and told her we now had someone else joining our household. She raised her eyebrows and her mouth opened.

“I know, my love. You are in charge of the household. But it’s my old friend Silas Beale, you know he has been family to me since I was a grasshopper.”

Annie relaxed.

“Dear Isaac. I love how life is coming full circle—we return to Dorset, we find Johnny, and now we have Silas with us. I don’t know what we will be doing with them all but I’m sure we will find a way.”

Annie took it all in her stride. Seeing how happy she was, I realized I hadn’t understood quite how stressed she had become in Plymouth. She had been constantly worried about the children and their health, and James’ kidnapping had almost killed her. For my sake she had kept it largely to herself. Now she wanted to find our permanent home in open countryside away from the stink, squalor, and crowds of the city. With the house we had rented, we had the time and a convenient location to search for what we wanted. I was to leave it to her, while I helped P. deal with his problems.

On a trip to Weymouth I called on Isaiah. He was about to visit an old friend of his, Captain Pierce, Master of the barque *Jacob*, currently in port, who made many voyages to New England. I expressed interest and he said he would be pleased to introduce me. I went with Isaiah to the dockside and we were rowed out to the *Jacob*, a larger vessel than *Rosie*. Captain Pierce met us as we boarded. I was struck immediately by his calm demeanor. Pleasant, young looking, clean shaven, soft spoken. The three of us retired to his cabin and talked about our New England experiences. I asked him if he was going back at any time.

“That I am, indeed. It so happens that I am due to return to New Plimouth, out of London with settlers and some cattle in September, putting into Weymouth for a few additional passengers as my last port of call before New England. It should be an interesting voyage.”

He let slip that Isaac Allerton, currently in London, would be

returning to New Plimouth on the same voyage. I was pleased and said so, I hadn't seen him for several years. I thought back, in Leiden and after that in 1621, New Plimouth, following my unfortunate experience at the hands of Epenow's people. It seemed a lifetime ago. I asked Captain Pierce to let me know when he was due in Weymouth. I would like the opportunity to meet with Mr. Allerton.

After leaving the *Jacob*, I asked Isaiah what news of *Rosie*. He sighed, he missed her but he admitted she was in good hands. David Tremaine had offered him opportunities to sail with him which he had turned down. It would have been too difficult to sail on *Rosie* under someone else's command. When *Rosie* was in port, Isaiah did go aboard for a chat and a sherry. *Rosie* had been active and, as a shareholder, he was delighted. I agreed and asked about David's plans to trade with the Mercedarians in Malaga. He said David had been tight-lipped about it.

Silas joined us the last week in August. The first task I set him was to find a small Exmoor pony for James. Within a few days he found a bay mare, ten hands at the withers, broken in and five years old, the previous owner having outgrown her. Silas took it on himself to be James' mentor and riding master. The pony was sound but unkempt, so Silas introduced her to James by establishing a regime to restore the pony to pristine condition. James was given the honor of naming her. He thought long and hard and then announced his decision: Daisy. He explained it was his favorite flower. Informed that he wouldn't be allowed to start riding Daisy until he had made her a shining example for all to see, he set to. It became evident that Johnny had many skills. Not only was he strong, fit, and a highly capable wrestler, he could read, write, and had a natural affinity for arithmetic. I began to regard him as my steward. Silas meantime had taken over the management of our small property without fuss. I talked to Annie about this turn of events.

"Isaac. I have always accepted your adventurous spirit, your independence. I have lost count of the scrapes and worse that have resulted. You are no longer a boy, you have responsibilities and a sense of

decorum that goes with it. You have needed someone to accompany you, to watch your back. For that person to be able to act as your secretary and book-keeper as well is a blessing beyond measure.”

### **Journal entry**—*September 1625*

And so it was. Johnny was delighted. Silas took him aside and tested his mettle. Johnny’s adventures as a player had obviously required him to learn good defensive fighting skills. He acted before rough crowds in rough neighborhoods. His fencing ability was rudimentary but someone had taught him the basics—he said he could no longer count the plays in which swordplay was a requirement. Nothing worked an audience up like fast, dangerous action on stage. To survive Johnny had had to learn quickly. Silas told him to work with me whenever possible, so he would learn new skills and I would regain some of my old ones. One thing he did excel at was archery. He hunted wildfowl and small game, and had won competitions against military archers. He had even become adept at the longbow, no longer a preferred weapon of war but a killing weapon even so.

The 4th of September was Annie’s 28th birthday. To celebrate we left the house while Jeannie, Johnny, and Silas minded the family. We rode to the Sun, where we had spent our wedding night. Jeremiah had prepared the marriage bedroom for us. We were wined and dined in our room in front of a roaring fire on that chilly September evening. Our meal was cleared, a further bottle of wine was left, and we were alone together.

A slow and joyous awakening as we explored each other. Annie, figure recovered from childbirth, full, firm and sensitive to every touch, after which we slept, her head on my chest, the softness of her body on mine, the night long.

## — CHAPTER 37 —

Annie was now engrossed with Jeannie and Silas in reorganizing the house and outbuildings to better suit our expanded family. The loft in the stable was being made into accommodation for Silas and Johnny and the reception rooms were being refurnished to provide a comfortable dining room and an elegant withdrawing room. At the same time, Annie had her new women friends out scouring the countryside for a permanent residence for us. I barely saw her, more accurately, I was careful to keep out of her way. I was able to drag her away for a ride with James astride a gleaming and content Daisy on a leading rein between us. Silas watched us go with a smile of satisfaction on his face. James had been having lessons from Silas every day and this was his first outing away from the yard, so was serious and very stiff. I told him to relax and enjoy himself which he slowly did. It was a glorious English September afternoon, colors muted with the approach of autumn, a gentle breeze stirring leaves that had matured from their summer vitality, the sun warm and mellow.

A message had been received that Captain Pierce and the *Jacob* were due into Weymouth on Thursday 24 September. I rode to the King's Arms and was waiting dockside when the *Jacob* came into harbor and dropped anchor. I had a waterman row me out and was aboard within 15 minutes. I enjoyed meeting Mr. Allerton again. I congratulated him on avoiding the terrible plague that London, especially, was suffering. He thanked God for his mercy. He was interested to hear of my many adventures in New England since we had

last seen each other in New Plimouth in 1621. He told me he would never forget my appearance when I had arrived like some apparition, seemingly more dead than alive from being tortured by Epenow's women, quite extraordinary, he said. I mentioned in passing that I had found Captain Standish an intriguing, discordant figure among the Separatists.

"You forget, Mr. Stanfield. Myles Standish is a small man with an incessant desire to prove himself. He commands through fear. I find him to be most unattractive, but, and a big but, he is a vital resource that has enabled us to survive in a hostile environment."

I didn't want to sound accusatory but asked about that hostile environment.

"We arrived in New England a bedraggled group, alone, frightened, and lost. Myles provided the backbone, the discipline that kept us together. We made mistakes in our treatment of the Indian. Tisquantum and Samoset were an extraordinary gift to us, but we feared the Indians, generally. Myles demanded we accept his leadership in dealing with perceived threats, which we did and his methods worked."

"I understand Edward Winslow saved Massasoit's life. That was a different approach which worked to your advantage, yes?"

"You are right. On the other hand Tisquantum was a mixed blessing, we were never certain of his loyalty. It was sad when and how he died. But by then we had formed our own alliances."

Allerton described the difficulties of the first few years and continually referred back to Standish as the one man who maintained the iron discipline that saw the settlers become a community. When Bradford took over as Governor, he had had little experience of leadership, everyone had looked to Reverend Robinson in Leiden as their spiritual, as well temporal, leader. I asked what might have happened if Reverend Robinson had made the passage in the *Mayflower*. Allerton thought a long time.

"I would like to say that things would have been different, but to be honest, I'm not sure they would have been. The circumstances

we faced wouldn't have changed, the malnutrition, disease, and cold. John Robinson was elderly and I don't believe he would have easily survived. If he had, would he have tempered Standish's zeal and impetuosity? Probably. Would we have had better relations with the Indians? Maybe. We did not have the problems that the Jamestown settlers had. By God's providence, the Indians were decimated by disease before we got there. However, we never entirely trusted them. They saw us as invaders that were too strong for them to resist. They made the best of it but they did need to be reminded every now and then and Myles was adept at playing off their intertribal rivalries."

We were on the quarterdeck leaning over the windward rail watching the activity in the harbor, each lost in the moment. After a while Allerton turned to me.

"Something that has always puzzled me. I wonder how Samoset and Tisquantum came to be where they were when we most needed them."

"Divine providence, again?" I suggested.

Allerton paused before responding.

"Rumor has it that you knew Tisquantum and Samoset long before the *Mayflower* sailed. In fact, it is said that you participated in rescuing Tisquantum from the Spaniards. Tell me about it."

I started responding with a description of the circumstances of his capture with others by Captain Hunt and sought to veer off into a commentary on the damage Hunt caused to Anglo-Indian relations by that capture. Allerton brought me back.

"Tell me about Tisquantum's rescue."

So, I gave a quick summary.

"Mr. Stanfield, you are avoiding the subject. What are you hiding?"

I gave a full account of the role of the Mercedarian religious order in the rescue of Christian sailors from the Barbary pirates. How they had been able to rescue some of the captive Indians. Captain John Smith, who had come across Tisquantum on Monhegan and persuaded him to be his guide along the New England coast, was incensed with his capture. He asked Sir Ferdinando Gorges to rescue

him. I had helped in that process.

“So you knew Tisquantum?”

“Yes.”

“What about Samoset? When he first appeared and strode into our camp, we thought he was a visiting angel. I watched him closely. I came to the opinion that he knew a lot more English and English ways than he was letting on. Was he one of the Indians that Gorges had kidnapped and taken to England?”

I prevaricated.

“His name does not appear on any of the lists I have seen of those Indians brought over to England.”

Allerton frowned.

“You didn’t answer my question. Did you know Samoset in England?”

I was trapped. I was in danger of weaving a tangled web of deception. Samoset did not want the English to know of his past life under the name Assacomet. I did not want to betray that secret.

“There were two Indians that I spent a great deal of time with in England at the request of Sir Ferdinando. Epenow, whom you knew about, and Assacomet. They both returned to New England.”

“I know what happened to Epenow. What happened to Assacomet?”

“I understand that he returned to his people. There is no record of Assacomet’s further engagement with the English.”

I swore under my breath. I shouldn’t have said that. Allerton picked up on it immediately. He would have made a good prosecuting lawyer.

“Isaac, with all due respect, I believe you are being evasive. Why?”

“What do you mean?”

“You keep talking about records and lists. You could have said Samoset never came to England. You didn’t. You could have said that Assacomet disappeared never to be seen again by the English.”

Allerton saw that I was troubled.

“Isaac. I have taken advantage of our friendship. I have pressed you too hard. I will ask you no more of this. It is clear you are constrained



in your responses. I accept and respect your discretion. However, let me tell you what I think. I have always had a slightly cynical view of the manner by which we landed on Cape Cod rather than the Hudson River. How we found our way to New Plimouth to be greeted and cared for by Samoset and Tisquantum. My colleagues prefer to believe it to be God's doing. I have not discussed this with anyone else, nor will I. I am happy that they should keep their faith in God's benevolent protection. The coincidences are just too great. I secretly believe the hand of man had more to do with it than the hand of God."

I was relieved to end that topic of conversation, but I couldn't resist one final remark on the subject.

"Perhaps the hand of God directed the hand of man."

Allerton laughed and we turned to other things. I asked him if he made many trips back to England and he said he did, being the roving ambassador representing the interests of his people. Those interests were many. They needed financial support. Although they were reaching self-sufficiency, they had to satisfy their existing investors, the London-based Merchant Adventurers. They sought new settlers. They were concerned about their permanent rights to settle, their patent with the Council of New England needed to be protected. They wanted to expand the territory under their control, wanted to gain rights to fish and barter for pelts, medicines, and timber with Indians all along the New England coast, up the many rivers and bays as far as Canada. I asked him about the natural propagation of settlements around the Massachusetts Bay, new settlers going to New Plimouth and then moving elsewhere. Did New Plimouth want to take ownership of the whole of Massachusetts Bay?

"Mr. Stanfield, by the time we sailed from Leiden our religious convictions had been tested to the limit, both in England and then in Holland. We have been called bigots, intolerant of those less committed, but it has been those convictions that have enabled us to persevere. I have talked of the temporal discipline exerted by Myles Standish—more important has been the discipline of our faith. We

reject the Church of England, seeing it as being too close to popery. We reject the divine right of Kings, although we recognize King Charles as our King. We thought we were going to land within the patent and under the rule of law of the Virginia Company. Instead, we landed in New England where there were no other settlements, no laws, and having to establish our own rules. There were what we called “Strangers” among us, people not of our faith and convictions, comprising a majority of the passengers. By making a compact on the *Mayflower* when we first landed, we established our own rule of law. If we hadn’t the conflicts among us would have torn us apart. With that compact, we could rely on Myles Standish to enforce those laws and it united the forty or so of us that shared a common faith and conviction.”

I asked what happened to the Strangers.

“Some of the Strangers joined with us. Of the one hundred passengers that arrived on the *Mayflower* we lost over half to disease, starvation, and the cold. Those early years bound together the survivors who stayed in New Plimouth. To an outsider I can understand we might be seen as intolerant, to survive we could not allow dissent. Those that did were required to leave or left of their own accord.”

I reminded him of my earlier question.

“To answer that, no, we do not want to have ownership of Massachusetts Bay. Therein lie many small settlements, none of which share our belief. We have no interest in governing people who have no interest in being governed by us. Occasionally, they seek our help and if it is in our interest to help them we do so. Sometimes they do not seek our help but their behavior puts our survival at risk and we are now strong enough to act throughout the region to protect our interests.”

I asked him about his views of Cape Ann and the settlement there.

“We have the need to find a productive fishing ground, fishing is vital to us both for food and for commerce. Before the settlement was established there we used Cape Ann as a convenient location to base our fishing. I went back to England a while back to seek a patent

from the Council of New England to allow us to control that particular location, and we were given that patent.”

I was surprised and said so. I had personal knowledge of the patent Sir Ferdinando had provided to Richard Bushrode and the Plymouth Company.

“Who provided you with this patent?”

“Lord Sheffield, in Sir Ferdinando Gorges’ absence.”

“Ah! Lord Sheffield is titular head of the Council, while Sir Ferdinando is distracted fighting the French, and he has at best minimal understanding of the situation in New England. Did the patent say anything about it covering territory not already settled?”

Allerton looked a little peeved and I apologized, the last thing I wanted to do was antagonize him. I hastened to say that he was in no way to blame for the disorganized and barely functional Council.

To change the subject I asked him to describe New Plimouth since I last visited. He was proud of the accomplishments of his little band, as he called them. They had survived and were now thriving, now grown to about 180 men, women, and children. From seeking sustenance from anyone who might provide it, they were now successful farmers, fishermen, and traders, moving further and further afield to establish trading relationships with the Indians which was a major reason for controlling the misbehavior of other settlers who, by their actions, persuaded the Indians that the English were stupid, cowardly, and not to be trusted. New Plimouth had become a well-functioning village, with everyone contributing to the common wealth, and at the same time they were given every incentive to provide for themselves and their families. A flow of new settlers continued to come, those that accepted the rules were welcome to stay and become part of that common wealth. Those that didn’t moved on, some to Virginia, some to return to England, some to start their own settlement or join another one. I said that I looked forward to visiting New Plimouth again.

Captain Pierce invited us to share a glass or two of wine with him in his cabin. We talked about the increasing flow of English settlers

sailing across the Atlantic, the numbers going to Virginia, beginning for the most part in Jamestown, then spreading along the Chesapeake Bay; those going to New England and New Plimouth and the spread of settlements around Massachusetts Bay and into Maine. I talked about the large number of settlers in Bermuda, as well as the onward flow to Virginia and the Caribbean islands.

Allerton was worried about King Charles, who was obviously more compliant with Catholicism, having just married the Roman Catholic Princess Henrietta Marie of France. The pressure on the non-conformists could only increase and emigration would accelerate. We agreed that Bermuda and Jamestown had their own government structures and were coping with the increased flow of immigrants, but what about New England? I pointed out that Allerton had admitted to me that New Plimouth had no desire to take on a broader role than it already had and there had been an attempt by Sir Ferdinando to establish a New England government under his son Robert which was dismal failure. However, with better planning, better leadership, and an influx of many more people such a government could and would be established.

Allerton shrugged. "We were prepared to work with Robert Gorges, but he was clearly incompetent. We would be prepared to work with any government established in New England."

I left wishing them well on their voyage and in the hope we would meet again.

Johnny and I spent a great deal of time together over the following weeks. We talked about his life as a travelling mummer. He chided me.

"Isaac, an actor to be called a mummer is considered derogatory. Mummers go about in painted faces and masks performing in mime on the streets to children and the like."

He had been engaged with a company of players who performed on stages throughout the country. I asked him about the girl who had enticed him away from Bincombe and his professed intent to enter the church. He laughed and said he wanted to escape, for Reverend

Stoddard was determined to see him ordained at some point and the girl was an opportunity. The adventure soured eventually, the rough living, the unruliness, the fights, the attempts by local authorities to prevent them from performing, took their toll. He said he wouldn't have missed learning to read, a necessity to learn his lines, to write plays, and to keep the books, as few others in the company had interest in the commercial aspects of performing to appreciative audiences while Johnny did and quickly saw how precarious it all was. He returned to Dorset and married a local girl, Beccy, so happy and then so sad. Since I too had won the hand of a fair lady only to lose her, I knew his loss. We commiserated, and I told him he would find another, like I did. Whenever time and opportunity permitted, Johnny and I exercised our fencing. He had the basic skills, good balance, and stamina while I was unfit, so good for both of us.

### **Journal entry—*October 1625***

Late in October, I needed to visit Plymouth to see Mr. Scroud. Annie suggested that I take Johnny with me, to mind my back, she said. She was worried about the stories coming from Plymouth. The Duke of Buckingham's army and navy personnel, having been sent to Dieppe to support the Huguenots and subsequently to fight the Spanish in an attack on Cadiz, had returned to Plymouth and were creating major concerns about their lawless behavior among the citizenry. Perhaps of greater concern was the number of plague deaths that had been reported in Plymouth over the summer. London had been hit very hard as had other large, densely populated towns. Annie pressed me to keep my trip short and if possible stay away from the mass of unruly soldiery.

I wanted Johnny in the meeting with Mr. Scroud, as he had taken over the household accounts and needed to talk finances with him. We decided to ride down, taking Maddie and Tess. We travelled quickly, aiming for the Minerva, arriving late in the evening on

Wednesday the 29th. Alfred Potts was happy to see us and, in spite of the mass of soldiers, sailors, and camp followers in Plymouth, found us a room, my old bedroom under the eaves. Over a drink at the bar, Alfred suggested we proceed with real caution. It seemed that the officers were barely in control of some of their troops at the moment. There had already been some nasty incidents with outraged locals clashing with dissolute military. We said we would be careful and then answered a stream of questions about Annie, James, Abigail, and Miranda; and how we were settling in the peace and quiet of the countryside. Alfred said he had to admit that, as much as he missed us all, we had done the right thing to move away from Plymouth.

Next morning we went to see Mr. Scroud. He was full of his normal doom and despondency about the political situation and its effect on the import and export of goods. In spite of himself, he did admit to a successful summer and autumn with respect to *Swallow* and was pleased that he and his family had been spared the sickness. He was happiest working through our housekeeping expenses with Johnny and was prepared to arrange a significant increase in funds we could access through his agent in Weymouth when we were ready to buy our new house.

Afterwards, I went to see John Gorges, arranging to meet Johnny back the *Minerva* later that day. John gave me news of his family. Sir Teddy Gorges had died earlier that year. I remembered how much Aby had loved him and how kind he had been to me. Very sad. He gave me news of Sir F. who had been on the expedition to Dieppe on the *Great Neptune*. She was once destined to be the Council's flagship in New England and now the center of a row between the French and English, the subject of a promise made by King Charles to deliver it to the French against the will of the English Navy. Sir F. was currently in London. John promised to continue to make use of *Swallow*. He found it to be of great benefit in the fast transport of packages and personnel. We had a mid-day meal together in his office and then I left him to meet up with Johnny. We planned to leave for Dorchester the next day.

Back at the Minerva, no sign of Johnny. I asked Alfred, who said Johnny had told him he had met up with some old friends from his days in an acting troupe and to let me know he would be back by sundown. I walked down to Sutton Pool to enjoy the sights and sounds of the harbor, seagulls screaming at each other, the constant slap of halyards on spars, the background noise of chatter and banter among the sailors and passersby. As dusk settled I returned to the Minerva and a tankard of ale. Some time later, I was beginning to be concerned about Johnny's absence. Alfred showed me a playbill he had posted on the inn's notice board.

"It says here, a play is to be performed by a new company of players 'Queen Henrietta's Men' at the Mitre Tavern in Winchelsea Street, on Friday the 31st, which is tomorrow night. They must be rehearsing, so that's where your Johnny will be."

I decided I would arm myself and walk round to the Mitre and see what was going on. I entered the tap room, full of officers and gentlemen, a much more prestigious company than one found at the Minerva. I ordered an ale and asked the bar-keep about the upcoming play. He said the players were rehearsing in the banqueting room and pointed to a door. I took my ale pot and wandered down a passage-way towards the sound of loud voices, declaiming. A stage had been set up with doors, balconies, and other bits of scenery. Players were on stage and many more lounging on the floor watching or talking among themselves. A figure arose from the throng and waved. It was Johnny.

"Hello, Isaac. Sorry, I was distracted by the memories of my past life. A few of the players here, I know from years back. They are just about to finish rehearsals and my friends asked me to join them on a tavern trawl. They arrived yesterday and been in rehearsal from the moment they got here, so are very thirsty. You are the local man, so we need you to show us around."

I laughed and said it should be fun but reminded Johnny we planned to leave for Dorchester first thing the following morning. Johnny, two of his friends and I left the Mitre and headed out.

Mindful of Annie's worry about the soldiers I suggested we stick to the outskirts of the town away from the crowds and squalor of the city center. With the more beer consumed the less concerned we became about our surroundings. As we bounced from bar to bar, we ventured deeper and deeper into the underbelly of Plymouth. The Naval dockyard was close by, the streets becoming darker, dirtier, and battered, as were the bars. At one hole-in-the-wall, Johnny's friends decided to stay. They found some female company of very doubtful pedigree and settled in for the rest of the night. It was time for Johnny and me to end the evening's trawl and head back to the Minerva. Only, Johnny, in all his inebriated certainty, wanted to continue. As we left the bar I spoke a little harshly and Johnny turned his back and stumbled off to what he hoped was another watering hole. Angry but not wanting to leave him, I followed.

The narrow lane was dank and littered with drunks and ne'er-dowells. I was blocked by a man lurching in front of me. I stopped and another cozied up behind me. I felt the prick of a knife in my side and before I could react I was kicked hard in the crotch. I doubled over, was kneed in the face and fell. I rolled and kicked one of my assailants in the knee who backed off and I rolled again to avoid the lunge of a sword from the other. It was my sword, taken while I had been distracted by the knife and too much drink. I swept the sword aside with my cloak and scrambled to my feet. With my back to the wall two armed men had me trapped. One of them laughed, playing the sword's tip around my face and body. The other man, angry and limping from my kick, knife in hand, told his friend to stop playing around and to run me through, so they could grab my purse and be out of there before the night-watch arrived. I crouched, my cloak my only defense, and waited. Damned if I was to end my days in such an ignominious fashion but the men, soldiers both, were determined. The swordsman lunged. I was able to deflect the blade with my cloak and it stuck in the folds. I wrenched and twisted the cloak away and swordsman lost his grip. The other man leapt into the fray with his knife ready and raised when his arm was run through by Johnny's



sword. The man swore and dropped the knife. I disentangled my sword, the attackers backed off, turned and fled.

“Thank you, Johnny. That was close. Let’s get out of here.”

In the semi-darkness, the scuffle gathered no interest. We returned to the Minerva. Neither of us spoke. Johnny embarrassed and me angry.

Next morning, we left for home. Johnny apologized for his behavior and I thanked him for saving my life. A few miles of silent riding and we regained our good humor to enjoy the day. We took the coastal route, a brisk day with scudding clouds across a pale blue sky. We were well bundled so the cold wind, harbinger of bad weather to come, caused us no grief apart from watering eyes when we cantered. The weather the following day was as promised which impeded our attempts to get home, so found comfortable accommodation at the Crown Inn in Puncknowle, leaving for Bincombe at first light on 2 November, Sunday.

## — CHAPTER 38 —

### **Journal entry**—*November 1625*

As we clattered into the stable yard, scattering the chickens, James came out to meet us. I jumped down and gave him a big hug and put him up on Maddie. I started leading him till I was informed by the rider that he was quite competent to ride Maddie without help from me.

“Oops. Sorry, James.”

We had a warm welcome from the family, even little Miranda was chortling happily. Abigail also wanted to ride, Johnny lifted her up in front of him and we rode round the stable yard in style. Annie came to me.

“Welcome home, my man, just in time for breakfast.”

“So happy to be home, sweet Annie.”

As I reached up to lift James from Maddie, out of the corner of my eye, I caught a touching welcome for Johnny from Jeannie.

After breakfast I sat at the kitchen table with James and Abigail on either knee, Johnny and Silas gone about their business, Jeannie clearing up, Annie sitting across from me with Miranda. It was a soul satisfying pause. James and Abigail vying with each other to tell me all that had happened the few days I was away. Apparently, we now had a full stable, a cart horse had been added, James had named it Daniel, a large chestnut with white socks, white blaze, and a soft

muzzle. Daniel and James had decided they were special friends.

“Whoa. What about Daisy?”

James looked at me with an earnest look on his face.

“Daddy, Daisy is my extra special friend. Don’t be silly.”

“Oh. I see. Silly me, indeed.”

Not to be outdone, Abigail was boastful of her special relationship with Silas, who let her ride with him on the cart behind Daniel.

“Silas says that I am his assistant driver. What does assistant mean?”

James told her. They continued describing their life on the farm. Annie and I smiled at each other. This was so much better than Plymouth. Later, when we were alone, I asked Annie whether there was something going on between Jeannie and Johnny. She feigned surprise.

“Why Isaac, what can you mean?”

I laughed.

“So there is something going on. I caught a tender moment between them when we arrived.”

“Very observant. Jeannie seemed distracted while you were away, I thought she was sick. Eventually, my gentle probing uncovered the problem, she was love-sick. She said she had fallen for Johnny the moment she first saw him—problem is, a love unrequited.”

“Oh dear. Johnny made no mention of Jeannie, but he certainly seemed to reciprocate her warmth of greeting.”

Annie grimaced. “Johnny has a lot of baggage with his memories, Becca is still a presence. Give him time. Jeannie knows this, she has resolved to be patient and not push things. Now, we need to talk about where we want to live.”

“I thought we had decided and you have an army of friends out looking.”

Annie nodded, cuddled Miranda, clearly reticent. I waited.

“Isaac, how do you find this house?”

“I find it well. What’s on your mind?”

Annie drew a deep breath and said she had come to love the house

and everything about it. She felt more at home here than she ever had at 15 Whimple Street. She and the children had been made to feel part of the community and the wider parish. She had a comfortable sense of belonging.

“Annie, love, I think that is both surprising and gratifying. No point looking for a new house when you’ve come to love the one we’re in. I have to tell you I am perfectly happy here. But, when we first saw this house, you felt it was a bit small. What has changed your mind?”

“I think we’ve been guilty of not being clear with each other. You thought I was concerned about the size and I thought you were looking for something larger. When we saw the house in West Stafford and agreed it was too grand, I had second thoughts and am so happy that we ended up renting this house. Now, Mr. Stanfield, should we call off the army and find out if and when we can buy this house?”

I laughed, rose with a child on each hip, leant over and kissed Annie. The five of us in a bundle, with squeals matching piglets at feeding time. Annie said to leave everything to her but there was plenty of time as our rental agreement still had many months to run.

I sent Johnny to deliver P. a note saying I would like to meet with him the following day and would be with Will. I rode to Dorchester and met with Will in his garden. A message had arrived from P. for me to come as soon as I may. Being a Dorchester Company investor, Will wished to join me at P.’s. It was a somber meeting. P. had had a report back describing the situation on Cape Ann as being without much that could be redeemed. On the positive side, P. said that Conant had gathered around him a small number of men, some with families, who were committed to following him as their leader, where-ever that might take them.

P. said he had a moral obligation to continue to seek support for a settlement in New England. All the reasons he had given over the years he still held to, those reasons were even more relevant now. King Charles was more intolerant of the Puritan movement than his father. There was increased pressure on imprisoning and/or banishing dissenters and their families, so a place needed to be found

to which they could emigrate. I was not particularly enamored of the Separatists, but they survived because they had no other option. I told him of my conversation with Isaac Allerton. The settlers in New Plimouth were driven to overcome terrible obstacles because, in part, they were protecting and providing for their families. I asked P. whether he thought it possible he could find like-minded investors among the ruins of the Dorchester Company who would provide the financial support for such a settlement. He thought for a while.

“Yes, Isaac. I believe I can.”

Will, who had been silent throughout our meeting, cleared his throat.

“I believe there are people that we know in this parish who are thinking seriously about emigrating, some of whom have the where-with-all to pay their own way.”

We waited for him to continue. P. had his hands together, as if in prayer, staring at them. After a long silence Will continued.

“Friends of mine with young families are frightened about their future under King Charles. They see New England as some kind of refuge. They have heard me talk of Isaac’s adventures. Unfortunately, these adventures have been somewhat romanticized.”

I frowned. Will saw my reaction.

“No, Isaac, not your fault. I waxed lyrical, it was my error, not seeing how I was talking to a susceptible audience. I need you to help me reset this idealized expectation. However, I must say that beneath the romanticism there is a strong, determined core.”

P. looked at me quizzically. I shrugged, Will laughed, and we continued our conversation, now on a somewhat lighter level. P. stayed quiet, I saw that I would need to talk to him in private, he had a disintegrating Dorchester Company to deal with. When we left, Will told me he would arrange a meeting with some of his friends, there was much to be discussed. I agreed and rode back to Bincombe. In the stable, I met Johnny, who helped me stable Maddie.

“Johnny, that was a sweet welcome Jeannie gave you on our return from Plymouth.”

Looking startled, he blushed. I pretended not to notice and continued grooming Maddie.

“Looks like the weather is closing in, we should have a white Christmas, don’t you think?”

“Isaac, I am confused about Jeannie.”

“How so?”

“My mind is still full of Beccy. I find Jeannie attractive, but she is distracting me from thoughts of Beccy, I feel I am betraying her.”

This was ground I had travelled over and felt qualified to talk about. I told him of my own journey towards redemption with Annie. How I had been foolish and self-absorbed to the point that I could have lost her.

“Johnny, my Aby has gone, she is a loving memory. In the same way Beccy will always have a secret place in your heart. Life goes on, today is a beautiful day, because we are in it, part of it, with all our days ahead of us. Grab the day and all those to come.”

Johnny said nothing but looked thoughtful.

### **Journal entry—December 1625**

It was Christmastide. We were determined to celebrate the twelve days of Christmas as one large happy family. We all went to the woods on the edge of our property in search of our yule log. James found a big one, so big that Daniel had to be harnessed up to drag it back home, James and Abigail on Daniel’s broad back with Silas leading. At home, Annie and Jeannie were in charge of the decorating, Johnny and James were sent foraging for green boughs, mistletoe, and holly, this year the berries were abundant and extra candles were bought. Then the cooking started. I was sent on shopping expeditions as the cooks demanded, it was clear that Annie intended on a great deal of entertaining. I took Daniel and the cart down to Weymouth with James and Abigail, Abigail ensuring we remained aware of her position as assistant driver. We had wine and spirits to

buy, as well as two geese, pheasants, and much else. I had been given long lists and handed them over to the relevant grocer, butcher, baker, wine merchant, or whomever else. It was all exciting, the children were a delight, and I loved the day.

An added welcome surprise, David Tremaine appeared, happy to spend Christmas with us. I had heard from Richard Bushrode that, by November, *Rosie* was being underworked. David and I talked much about it between festivities. He was worried, politics playing havoc with good, honest trading between England and the Continent. He was determined to reopen the Malaga route. We agreed to talk further about his stalled plans after Christmas. Festivities indeed: we entertained, were entertained, attended services in Bincombe and in Dorchester, went caroling, with Johnny in fine voice, and played games. Johnny had put together a play with song and persuaded Jeanie, Silas, James, and Abigail to go into intense rehearsal. They were all sworn to secrecy, even Abigail, bursting though she was to tell us. The performance was such a success that it was repeated the following evening before assembled guests at a reception we gave. It was a season like no other. Silas and Johnny becoming irreplaceable and loved members of the family, David relaxed telling exciting stories. The joy and happiness were irresistible to Johnny and Jeannie. They became betrothed on New Year's Eve to our delight.

### **Journal entry—*January 1626***

P. told me that the returns from the latest shipment of fish from Cape Ann had still been poor. There was nothing left for him to do except close down the settlement. A vessel was being prepared and would be sailing as soon as the weather cleared, with the intent to fetch the settlers back to England. It would be up to Roger Conant to determine whether he wanted to return. If not, P. would ensure he, and any of his loyal group of followers, would continue to be provided with essential support. I thought that generous. But P. said on the

contrary, they were there at the Dorchester Company's behest, an obligation that had to be met. P. was still determined to find a way to establish a viable settlement, refusing to let go of his dream. I felt he had me a part of that dream.

David and I spent much time talking about the Malaga run. He had hoped to persuade a number of his fellow captains to establish a fleet of merchantmen, suitably armed and exercised to deal with lone pirates. If captains were interested, the owners weren't, if owners were interested, investors weren't. He found it impossible for all parties to agree. He said he would try again in the spring and would let me know. If he did arrange something viable, he felt it would be beneficial if I accompanied them, at least on the first trip. I knew the Mercedarians and they trusted me, or so David thought. I suggested we attempt to get a note to them explaining that we were interested in renewed trading, subject to reducing the risk of interception by pirates. He agreed and I wrote a note which he would find a way of getting to Malaga.

Early January, David returned to *Rosie*. He would be making coastal passages through the spring. I felt guilty that as the major shareholder, I wasn't doing enough to provide commercial opportunities for *Rosie*. I was distracted by domestic affairs. David knew this and told me it was time I enveloped myself in my family. With his contacts, a share of the profits, and work from Richard Bushrode and Isaiah Brown's business network, he would be busy enough. One chance remark surprised me.

"You'll never believe who I saw recently."

I shook my head.

"Kate Hardy."

"Gracious me. Where? How?"

"She was in Weymouth, staying with a relative. A sad story, there was an outbreak of the plague near them. Davey was taken, Kate and Beth barely survived. She was so sick she was unable to farm for a month or so and the landlord kicked her out of her tenancy."

"She never married?"



“Seems not.”

“That’s too bad, I really liked the children. How is Kate?”

“Not too good. She has been recovering physically and emotionally for the last six months, wandering from place to place.”

“How did you react when you saw her?”

“If you mean, am I still in love with her? No, I’m not.”

That was a quick response, I thought.

David, a little rushed, went on, “I like her but she is one tough lady. I do feel badly about her losing Davey, though, he was an irreplaceable part of her life. Now, she has no farm, living hand to mouth. Still, the experience might have softened her some.”

I thought when Annie hears about this she will be trying to match-make them. Anyway, so sad. We moved on to other matters.

### **Journal entry**—*February – June 1626*

New England became a distant distraction over the next few months, perhaps for the first time in many years. I was saddened to think that, after all the efforts that Sir F. and P. had put into trying to build settlements there, so little had been accomplished. But my life in England became of over-riding importance. My family was thriving, Annie and I had become inseparable. My business interests were of some concern, as Mr. Scroud reminded me in his regular fortnightly report. Will and Elenor lost yet another child, baby John. Annie spent much time with Elenor. Will kept his feelings hidden, not wanting to talk about it. Buying the house, which we had started calling Barrow Farm, became the focus of our attention. Our lease would end on the 1st of August so that was a target date for us to take ownership.

Much time was left for us to enjoy the late spring and early summer. We were always together as a family, exploring the countryside, visiting friends, just cherishing the children growing up and together. Johnny and Jeannie had decided to get married once we bought Barrow Farm. They wanted their own home, which was well as Barrow

Farm would have been a little crowded. For Silas, there would still be roomy accommodation above the stable. New England receded further and further in my mind. My life was here, my business now needing my attention, a fine family to be proud of, roots being firmly re-established close to my birthplace, my beloved wife beside me and with me, always. Life was good.

A threatening cloud appeared on the horizon with a meeting called by Richard Bushrode in Weymouth of the shareholders of the *Sweet Rose* together with David Tremaine and Mr. Scroud. Mr. Scroud delivered a report that showed *Rosie* was operating at a loss, too few trading voyages, insufficient cargo in or out. Richard explained the challenges in garnering business with continental ports, the political obstacles with France, Spain, and Holland making it difficult to build trade with those countries. David had hoped to re-establish relations with the Mercedarian monks in Malaga, but England was technically at war with Spain and trade was impossible. The problems with La Rochelle had reached a boiling point. England, by siding with the Huguenots, was pitted against France, yet English ships were being provided to the French government to fight the Huguenots. But, said David, while the navies and the armies of the Great Powers were fighting each other, trade, the lifeblood of the nations concerned, still went on. Cadiz was to be avoided but Basque Bilbao was open. La Rochelle was a maelstrom but La Havre was untouched. The trick, he said was to avoid the combatant military. I added that the occasional pirate didn't help matters.

The alternatives were considered. *Rosie* was old, was now the time to lay her up? How about the transatlantic trade? Was there sufficient opportunity in the coastal waters of the British Isles? How about the Scandinavian and Baltic trade? Apart from Mr. Scroud, there was little interest in retiring *Rosie*. For trading opportunities in the areas mentioned, Weymouth was the wrong home port. *Rosie* would need to move to Bristol, London, or up the East coast to places like Whitby in Yorkshire. Forget about Yorkshire, we would lose all our business relationships and have to start again in a competitive

environment. Moving *Rosie's* base of operations to Bristol would not greatly improve commercial opportunities and the thought of having *Rosie's* home port on the stinking Thames beggared belief. So what to do? David said he would like to try Bilbao. I pointed out that it was only a few years ago he was fleeing from Bilbao for his life. What made him think he wasn't still a marked man?

"Yes, there were people there that weren't particularly friendly. But, if you remember, I had a strong network of people I trusted. The commercial opportunities are immense. I have the contacts."

Both Richard and Isaiah Brown agreed that the opportunities were there from their own past dealings. They knew a number of local import/export agents who were always looking for merchantmen prepared to trade with Spain. The threat of war between Spain and England had put a dampener on things, but trade was picking up again. I asked David about his plan to organize a fleet of merchant ships to combat pirates.

"It will work as well if not better sailing to Bilbao rather than all the way round Gibraltar to Malaga," he insisted.

After further discussion, it was agreed that David should add a trip to Bilbao in the late summer. Richard and Isaiah would work with their agents and contacts to prepare a suitable cargo to export and Spanish produce to bring back. If the voyage was successful then we could establish a regular run. David asked me if I would be prepared to make this first trip with him. He would welcome my skills, as he put it, in establishing good business relations with the right commercial interests in Bilbao. I took that to mean he was slightly less sanguine about his possible reception in Bilbao than he was letting on. I said I would check with Annie and let him know.

### **Journal entry—*July – August 1626***

By the end of July, we had become owners of Barrow Farm. We didn't see much of Will, who was appointed Dorchester's Capital

Burgess (Member of Parliament) and took his seat in the House of Commons. Jeannie and Johnny were married by Reverend Stoddard at Holy Trinity Church in Bincombe, on Saturday 12 August. We held a reception for them at Barrow Farm.

Annie and I had discussed my making a trip with David Tremain to Bilbao. I explained it was something of an exploratory trip in the expectation we would be able to establish a regular, profitable trade. I told her of my concern that business was difficult at the moment and we needed to find new trading routes or, rather, re-open old ones. What persuaded her was the absence of any discussion of my return to New England. I was staying closer to home and I would be away for no more than a fortnight or so. She saw that I was a little restless. I hadn't been home for such an extended period in our whole life together. Annie suggested strongly that Johnny accompany me, saying he was my protector. Jeannie was a little unsure but seeing how excited Johnny was at the prospect gave him her blessing.

## — CHAPTER 39 —

### **Journal entry**—*September 1626*

It had been a year since Annie and I had last spent a night together away from the family at the Sun. It seemed appropriate that on Annie's birthday, 4 September, we made good on the promise to return. As always, Jeremiah made us most welcome. It was a warm evening, we were given a meal and wine in abundance, delivered to our room, and we were discretely left to our own devices. Without the bustle and constant distractions of Barrow Farm, we were free to explore each other with abandon, no sheets and blankets covering us, no fear of interruption. We rediscovered what pleased us most and explored new ways of loving and coupling. By dawn, drained and sublimely content, we slept entwined.

Early on Wednesday, 7 September, Johnny and I boarded *Rosie*. We left Weymouth heading south. Weather excellent, wind on the starboard beam from the west, full crew, most of whom were new to me, I would get to know them on the way down. David had arranged for another merchantman to rendezvous with us near Ushant, so we could make the journey together for mutual defense. He knew the captain, an old naval contact. The merchantman, the *Argosy*, was a lot bigger than *Rosie* at some 350 tons. She was formidably armed with a large crew, well exercised in gunnery, according to David. I had to ensure that *Rosie* was well stocked, perhaps over stocked, with

ammunition. The guns were exercised daily, the crew already proficient were brought to commendable readiness. We felt confident that *Rosie* and the *Argosy* could deal with any pirate incursion.

Friday, 9 September, dawn. Ushant over the horizon to larboard, sail sighted off starboard quarter. Expecting it to be the *Argosy*, we continued our course. Lookout called saying the vessel gaining and he didn't like the look of her. David went up the ratlines with a telescope and came back quickly.

"Not the *Argosy*. I think she's a pirate, although she is flying a Dutch flag. We need to head inshore."

He gave orders and *Rosie* fell off to head southeast under full sail but the pirate had the weather gage and the advantage. Gun crews called to action stations, load all guns and prepare to run out. David said it would come to a fight and there was no way he would accept capture by pirates. We needed to take the fight to them, board them before they were ready. He detailed his plan of action to the officers to inform their respective watches. David would endeavor to ram the pirate, *Rosie's* starboard bow striking the pirate's larboard quarter. Just prior to ramming, the starboard guns would be run out and fired with canister at the pirate main deck to kill or maim as many crew as possible. Leaving first mate Pete Couch in command, he would lead a charge onto the pirate's quarterdeck to capture or kill their captain, *Rosie's* starboard watch to be part of that charge, seize the pirate's swivel guns, load and direct to the ship's waist and repel all attempts by the pirate crew to reach the quarterdeck. Larboard watch to the foredeck again to capture their swivels. With the pirates contained, we'd demand their surrender. I could think of all sorts of other consequences, but it seemed as good a plan in the circumstances as any. Crew were informed and kept out of sight armed, positioned, and ready. Our swivels loaded but below the rails, not mounted. Let the pirates close then give them hell. *Rosie* would not be easy pickings. I kept my counsel. We were isolated and there was no sign of the *Argosy*. I checked with Johnny. He had his sword with two loaded pistols in his waistband and a huge grin on his face. He looked like a pirate himself.

The pirate ship approached and fired a cannon. A white plume of water splashed ahead of us, a warning shot. They ran parallel a few hundred yards off our starboard beam, to windward. We were in a difficult position. Their larboard guns were run out, they came closer and we were ordered to furl sails. David ordered tops'ls furled slowly and clumsily and directed the helmsman to up a point. We were coming together slowly, then 50 yards off, he ordered starboard guns run out and fired at will, swivels mounted and ready. As soon as the guns fired, he ordered the helm hard over and *Rosie* turned and headed for the pirate. Yells from the pirate. They fired a broadside. One round hit home, screams from below deck, then we hit. Swivels fired, *Rosie's* crew leapt from their hiding places and swarmed over onto the pirate vessel. David, myself, and Johnny leading the way. We hacked and fought our way to the quarterdeck. Our surprise attack had pushed the pirates back.

I heard a cry of "Fire." A shout from Pete Couch to retreat back to *Rosie*, flames coming from her main hatch. A mad scramble back by *Rosie's* crew, the pirate crew frantic to disengage from the burning *Rosie*. No more thoughts of fighting, except on the pirate's quarterdeck. The three of us found ourselves surrounded. Cut and thrust, no quarter. I stumbled, hit on the side of my head. On my knees, I saw David take a sword thrust to the shoulder. Johnny above me. Then a stampede of feet away from us, repeated shouts to disengage. Flames were leaping up *Rosie's* sails and rigging, the pirate catching fire as well. I saw the remnants of *Rosie's* crew back trying to douse the flames, pirate crew pushing *Rosie* away and setting sails to escape.

David said, "Quick, over the side."

Johnny and I helped David to the rail and fell overboard, on the far side from *Rosie*. We swam around the stern of the pirate vessel as it drifted, rigging now well alight. As its sails caught the wind, it moved increasingly quickly away from the burning *Rosie*. David was in a bad way. We found a broken spar blasted from one of the boats floating on the water, large enough to take David's weight and we hauled him half out of the water. Looking over to *Rosie*, the flames

and smoke had enveloped her, but there were signs of action. Burning rigging and spars were being cut away and thrown overboard, followed by the blackened remains of the mizzen mast. Pumps had been set up and water was being poured into the lower deck, blackened residue flooding out of the gun ports. No one paid attention to us. They were fighting to save *Rosie*. David had a sword thrust that had gone clean through his shoulder, breaking a bone. He had lost a deal of blood. I patched him up with some torn cloth. Johnny and I had no injuries I was aware of, except my sore head. We started paddling towards *Rosie*, but found she was drifting away from us faster than we could swim so we hung on to David's spar and watched the battle to save her.

Within half an hour the pirate had disappeared over the horizon. No interest in us, too busy fighting for their own survival. *Rosie*, too had survived, but only just. She had become a hulk, blackened, burnt and broken, now too far away for anyone to see us. We needed to start concentrating on our own survival. There were other floating reminders of the brief engagement between *Rosie* and the pirate, now widely scattered. I was really worried about David. With some charred rigging we tied him onto his spar and swam out to harvest larger pieces of wood. Within a few minutes we had gathered three charred and broken pieces of spar and tied them together for a larger float. Further away a broken hatch cover which Johnny was able to push back and between us we heaved it on top of my new float which I tied down. We transferred David, now unconscious on his back. Johnny knelt by him and examined his shoulder, it was a mess but my rags had stopped the blood flow. Johnny had me strip off my shirt to use as padding and strapping for the wound. He had reset the bone, David too far gone to feel anything. Now we waited, luckily under a warm sun. I went back to the original float so I could get most of my body out of the water.

Several hours later, half asleep, we were shocked into wakefulness by a loud hail. We looked up and saw a longboat a few yards off, further off a navy frigate. There was no sign of *Rosie*. We were asked



some obvious questions which I answered and the boat came alongside our raft. The cox'n ordered four sailors over the side to lift David into the boat. Johnny and I climbed on, were rowed back to the frigate and helped aboard. David was dispatched down to the orlop, where a naval surgeon awaited, with Johnny following. I was given a shirt from the slop chest and taken to see the Captain in his cabin. I knew him, a friend of Isaiah Brown, Captain Carson.

"Mr. Stanfield. I thought I recognized you. What happened?"

He had his secretary take notes for his official log, so I was succinct. He shook his head at the account. He had known *Rosie* almost since she had been launched 20 plus years ago and thought it all sad. He said we were lucky they had found us, they were on their way back to Plymouth from La Rochelle with dispatches when they heard the distant gunfire and came to investigate. He asked, "How long ago did the pirate leave?"

"About three hours. *Rosie* certainly did not seem capable of doing more than fighting to stay afloat, probably a few miles to the East. The pirate probably hove to somewhere to make repairs. She was heading southwest, but with the prevailing westerlies she won't be going far."

The Captain studied his chart, called for his Master. They discussed the options and the Captain decided to check on *Rosie*, then to go after the pirates, maybe an hour away, if they chose the right direction. Likely the pirates were heading for the Med. I thanked him and said I needed to check on my crewmates.

David was still unconscious, stripped on an operating table. Johnny was leaning over David arguing with the navy surgeon. David's shoulder wound was raw, like a piece of butchered meat and inflamed. The surgeon wanted to take the arm off at the shoulder. Johnny pointed to the shoulder bone which had already been reset and there was nothing wrong with the arm apart from massive bruising. He said the wound needed to be cleaned, the muscles should be stitched up, and David brought up into the fresh sea air. They turned to me for a deciding opinion. I agreed with Johnny. The surgeon

said, “So be it” and I left Johnny to deal with David and returned, at the Captain’s invitation, to the quarterdeck.

Within 30 minutes, following the trail of charred debris, we hove to close by *Rosie*. What a pitiful sight, bowsprit standing proud while masts and rigging gone, apart from a blackened stump rising from a fire ravaged fo’c’sle, gunwales and rails splintered and burnt, hull scorched where flames had flared out of the gun ports, pumped water gushing over the side. A small group of *Rosie*’s crew, still dampening down the smoking deck, stopped what they were doing and wearily raised arms in greeting. Johnny and I, accompanied by a navy lieutenant, were rowed across in the ship’s longboat and helped aboard by Tiny Hadfield.

“My God, Mr. Stanfield, we thought you were dead. Where’s the Skipper?”

“Hurt, but he’ll recover. What about you? Who have you lost?”

“Pete Couch killed with five crew by the pirates, a further five killed in the fire.”

He pointed to the shrouded bodies. Dusty was in the main cabin working on a further eight seriously injured—burns, broken bones and cuts.

“I’m sorry, Tiny. What a bugger. What about *Rosie*, is she salvageable?”

“Don’t know. Haven’t had a chance to survey the extent of the damage below deck, still putting out fires. But we are taking on water in spite of our constant pumping.”

The navy lieutenant said help was needed and sent the longboat back to fetch crew and fire-fighting equipment, saws, and axes. The boat returned with the navy carpenter, as well. I told Tiny and his crew to rest while the lieutenant and his team, Johnny and I went below deck to extinguish, clear, and survey the damage. One of *Rosie*’s two pumps was working and two exhausted crew members were hard pushed to manage the inflow. The lieutenant ordered two of his crew to take over. Johnny and I dropped down into the fore hold with a lantern. Significant fire damage, ruined cargo, and we were knee

deep in water. There was a large crack in the hull, starboard bow where Rosie had rammed the pirate, through which water poured. The carpenter shook his head. In his opinion, the crack could only be fixed in a shipyard and it was very doubtful *Rosie* would survive being towed back. Given the extent of the fire damage to *Rosie* and her cargo, as well as her age, he was doubtful she was even worth salvaging. I had figured as much. We returned to the lower deck and the carpenter reported his findings to the lieutenant.

“Your decision Mr. Stanfield. What do you propose to do?”

There was only one answer.

“Transfer the crew and allow *Rosie* to die a dignified death, with the dead to remain on board to go down with the ship.”

The longboat ferried across *Rosie's* injured, followed by Tiny and the rest of the crew. I was the last to leave. I felt an enveloping sadness as I looked over the poor ravaged boat, the shrouded and weighted bodies, remembering the thirteen years I had known her. *Rosie* shuddered, fighting to stay alive as the holds filled with water. Part of me willed her to fight on but she slowly bowed her head and then increasingly quickly started her final journey. The lieutenant's urgent call forced me to abandon her and as we pulled away I asked that we stop and respect *Rosie's* end. As she slipped below the surface, Johnny, somber with his memories, put a comforting hand on my shoulder and we left.

*Rosie's* exhausted crew were given hammocks aboard the navy frigate and we were all told to rest and stay below, out of the way. I was unaware of the capture of the pirate vessel. Enough of a repair had been done to it by the pirate crew that it could be taken as a prize and sailed independently for Plymouth, the pirates chained and in the hold. Two days later we were in Plymouth. I asked Johnny to find *Swallow* or seek a passage for us back to Weymouth and told Tiny to keep the crew together, find temporary accommodation where necessary, and see to the injured. I would return to deal with any longer term plans as soon as I could. I left a message for Doc Vines to ask him to examine David at his lodgings in Plymouth. A

return message from Doc Vines said he would deal with it.

I went to Mr. Scroud's office to give him a bare bones description of *Rosie's* loss and the death of eleven of her crew. Together, Mr. Scroud stunned into silence, we went to John Gorges' office, as acting Governor, and gave him a full account. Richard Bushrode and Isaiah Brown were in either Dorchester or Weymouth and, as my shareholders in *Rosie* and investors in the lost cargo, they needed to be informed as soon as possible. David, the Skipper, was in no condition to inform next of kin, so Mr. Scroud, having a full crew manifest, undertook to write the letters to the families of those who had died. I stated that a month's wages should be provided to each of the crew as well as to the widow or primary dependent of those who had been killed. Mr. Scroud objected, John thought it generous. Leaving Mr. Scroud to handle the details and John to inform any further authorities that required notice, I went down to the harbor, met up with Johnny and told Tiny what I had done, for which he expressed his thanks. I asked him to keep in touch and let Mr. Scroud know where he could be contacted. *Swallow* was not in port. However, Johnny had been able to find a local trader leaving on the evening tide.

Twenty-four hours later we were in Weymouth. I left messages for Richard and Isaiah to meet me the next morning at Richard's office and Johnny and I hired horses for the night and hacked home, in silence and gathering darkness, each with our own thoughts. Barrow Farm was dark and still, everyone abed as I crept into the kitchen. I heard Annie moving and met her at the foot of the stairs, she armed with a large and heavy poker.

"Thank God, it's you. What happened, why are you back so soon?"

All being said with her arms flung round my neck, nearly braining me by the poker still clutched in her hand, and head buried in my chest. Gently disengaging we went to the kitchen hearth and she sat while I stoked up the fire, having retrieved the poker. Then sitting next to her and holding her hand I told her what had happened.

The next morning, I rode back to Weymouth, leading Johnny's mount to meet with Richard and Isaiah. Isaiah was heartbroken, he

seemed to age ten years as I described the loss of *Rosie*. He became old, bent, and tearful. *Rosie* had been his pride, his life, it had been his primary source of income. He had been trying to sort out his future, but now with *Rosie* gone, likely he would go to live with a distant relative. Richard, too, was distressed. We spent time talking about the men lost, many were new but Isaiah spoke with great feeling of those he had known, some for many years.

We discussed the advisability of David Tremain's plan to rendezvous with the *Argosy*. The plan had its risks, obviously, but the two vessels together would have been a match for the pirate. I wondered what had happened, why hadn't the *Argosy* been there. Had it had been delayed, or otherwise missed joining up with *Rosie*? We would need David Tremain to follow up on this. With *Rosie* gone, we agreed that our partnership should be dissolved once the final accounting had been completed. Asked about David Tremain, I said I was very worried as he had little use of his arm and might be disabled for the rest of his life. I needed to go and see him. Richard advised me that *Swallow* was due into Weymouth in a few days, on its way to Plymouth. I told him I would take passage in her and I returned to Dorchester.

Monday, 26 September, in Plymouth, I went to David's lodgings. The door was opened by Kate Hardy. It took a moment for me to recognize her. She had lost weight, looked drawn, worry lines on her forehead. She smiled a greeting.

"Hello Kate. Long time. How's the patient?"

"Mr. Isaac Stanfield. You have changed, matured."

"I have. David told me about your loss, I'm so sorry, Davey was a fine boy."

She gave a wan smile, reached up and kissed me on the cheek. "Come in. My patient isn't."

"Isn't what?"

"Patient."

Kate led the way upstairs to a large room, David's shore base, a small bed in the corner. An attempt had been made to tidy the

room, but still very much a bachelor's lair. David was reclining on the bed, arm in a sling. He attempted to rise to greet me and I gently restrained him. He did not look well, clearly still in pain, wincing when I touched him. He saw my reaction.

"It's your bloody doctor, Vines. He has me doing strengthening exercises, Kate here is his devil's disciple, forcing me to follow the prescribed regime. The cut muscles are knitting but it's taking too long, the exercises are damned painful. What's worse is the current set of exercises aren't even touching those muscles. I hate to think what it will be like then, but must wait until the knitting process is complete. I have damage to my back and upper arm that needs rubbing with some foul-smelling oil and stretching. Kate has volunteered to torture me in that regard."

Kate said she had to go fetch Beth, who she had left with a friend, and departed with a smile and a wave.

"Well, David, so Kate has returned."

He grimaced. "She turned up three days ago. Said she had heard I was in trouble so came looking for me. I was in a bad way, she has been a great help."

I raised an eyebrow. "But...?"

"Isaac, I don't know. She remains a strong woman, with a mind of her own, useful in an emergency. The time I spent with her at Woodyates was difficult. I loved her, she was passionate, but she wanted me to be something I wasn't."

"You mean, like a farmer?"

"Yes."

"Understandable in the circumstances, wouldn't you say?"

"I know. She was a widow and a tenant farmer, and women aren't tenant farmers."

"David, she's no longer a tenant farmer. It is clear she is fond of you. Forget about Woodyates, let the wind blow where it might. By the way, Annie sends her love. I didn't know that Kate would be here, but if I had and told Annie, she would have had some words to say to you."

David smiled ruefully. We talked about his future. He said he had money set aside so was comfortable for the moment. He had asked Kate what her plans were. She had been talking to people in Weymouth who were thinking about leaving England. She wanted her own land to farm. Apparently, there were a number of young families, many in the Dorchester area, that were interested in New England. According to David, she had mentioned P.'s name as being an instigator. David asked me if I knew anything about it. I said that P. was most certainly determined to support emigration to New England and was putting not so subtle pressure on me to go back. Before I left him, I asked that he try and find out what happened to the *Argassy*. He scowled at the mention and said he had already written to the captain seeking an explanation for the non-appearance. As yet, he had received nothing from him, not even a message of condolence.

## — CHAPTER 40 —

### **Journal entry**—*October – December 1626*

On my return from Plymouth to Barrow Farm, Annie greeted me saying Silas was not well. He seemed to have a fever and was confined to his bed above the stables. I immediately went to see him. He was semi-conscious and looked terrible. His eyes opened when he heard my voice and tried to sit up. I gently pushed him back down and he lay struggling to breathe, unable to speak. Slowly, he settled and breathing became easier. He closed his eyes and slept. I went back to the house and asked Annie if the doctor had been.

“He hopes to come today, but he is very busy as there are a number of people sick. Reverend Stoddard came yesterday and asked me and a number of other women in the parish to provide food and care for the suffering.”

I was shocked. I had only been away a few days. The sickness had appeared so quickly. Annie reminded me that it was only a few months ago that it had come and gone, taking little Mary Whiteway, among many others. She was very concerned about the children and made certain they stayed away from Silas and families who had the sickness.

I spent time with P. He told me that the boat he had sent to Cape Ann to fetch the settlers back to England had returned with some settlers. As I expected, Roger Conant had decided to stay in New



England with his close circle of friends and family. Subsequently, he had heard that they were moving 15 miles west along the coast of Massachusetts Bay to a place called Naumkeag, in fact, they should have already arrived there. There were about twenty people all told, including wives and children. P. had found some hardy souls prepared to continue their financial support, now he was keen to find other settlers and their families to go to Naumkeag. Again I sensed the implicit pressure.

Silas became worse. The doctor offered little hope. Silas was an old man and did not have the necessary defenses to fight the contagion. Then Miranda and Jeannie were struck down. There was little we could do. Will told me how they had sat with Mary and prayed for her deliverance but she had always been in God's hands and it had been His decision to take her to Him. Annie fought the sickness in Miranda with every last ounce of her being, but it was like trying to stop a mist creeping over the landscape. On Monday, 23 October, Miranda left us. Silas followed the next day. Annie, energy spent, fell into a deep despondency and I put her to bed. Jeannie recovered and after several days recuperating was able to help me with house-keeping and child minding duties which I had thrown myself into to distract me from the horrors. I remembered thinking life was good. Foolish, God's retribution.

Johnny, while mindful and attentive to his wife, provided a strong shoulder for me. He took over Silas' duties. I worried about Annie, but could do little more than cradle her in my arms in bed through the long nights, sharing her sorrow. A week after Miranda died, Annie came back into her welcoming family. James and Abigail greeted her in delight as she had indeed been away, far away from them as she dealt with her loss. At one point she turned to me and asked me how I was dealing with Silas. I said, simply, "I will never forget him and will always be grateful to him for making me what I am."

Annie was being drawn into Joanna Sprague's circle of friends. While she continued to mourn Miranda, it was something she kept to herself and to me lying in bed in the early hours, waking,

remembering, sobbing herself back to sleep. It was in these moments, holding her to me, I decided that I could never again leave her for extended periods of time. We were joined together, deeply content with and dependent on each other. Deep wounds could only be assuaged by the intimacy of our loving presence together. Annie and I looked back on our time in Plymouth, where we had wanted to escape the unsavory aspects of city life to the country. Now, we were living in the country, but close by a different, smaller town, while still rough in places, quieter without the traffic, disease, and debauchery of a seaport. With the advantage of a few miles distance between Bincombe and Dorchester we were able to keep separate our family life from the increasingly social life of Dorchester. It was where I grew up with my own circle of childhood friends, all of whom welcomed Annie as one of their own, most of whom were now parents of the children with whom James and Abigail played. The center of this society was Holy Trinity Church and the presiding oracle and Godfather was P. We were able to participate while still enjoying the more gentle godliness of Reverend Stoddard.

Christmas 1626 was a continuous celebration. Miranda retreated a little in our thoughts, a background presence. By Twelfth night we were exhausted, but, in the main, happily so. Being my 30th birthday, we had one more dinner party to celebrate. We toasted each other with the hope and expectation that 1627 would be everything we could wish for. Annie lifted her glass to me at the other end of the table, I did likewise. For a moment, everyone and everything faded into a murmuring background. Just Annie and me, eyes speaking our deep and abiding love for each other.

### **Journal entry—*January 1627***

One day late in January, P. called a meeting of local people interested in New England. A number of friends of mine had been invited to attend. Ralph Sprague was there, Will was not, he had returned to

London as our Member of Parliament. I knew or recognized many of the attendees, one I did not. Ralph had brought him and introduced him to us all. His name was John Endecott. Apparently, he had been born in Dorchester. The family name was unfamiliar to me, and it seemed that P. didn't know him either. He was referred to as Captain Endecott, so I supposed he had seen military service on the Continent. Of average size, broad shouldered, ruddy complexion, he had bushy, dark eyebrows over piercing brown eyes, a long nose, moustache and a narrow beard. He looked to be about ten years older than me. Captain Endecott shook my hand firmly and said that he had been looking forward to meeting me for some time as I was reputed to be an expert and seasoned traveler to New England.

Once everyone had settled, P. explained that the Dorchester Company was in the process of being dissolved. They had determined to complete their obligations to the settlers remaining and supplies were being sent, including more cattle to the dozen or so that had previously been carried over. Businessmen, including some members of the Company, were being persuaded by P. to form a new company with additional investors, or adventurers as P. called them. The new entity was being referred to as the New England Company. Confusing I thought, and wondered how the Council for New England fitted into this. P. explained that the reason for this meeting was to bring together the people he understood to be interested to some degree in the possibilities of moving to New England with their families and thought it useful for them to learn more about the place, as well as to establish a regular dialogue to help them reach a conclusion about such a momentous move. He said that I was knowledgeable and was sure I would be happy to answer questions they might have.

To my surprise, P. then asked me to speak about my experiences. I looked startled and P., clearly uncomfortable, said that he wanted to keep the meeting informal and hoped I would provide some words of enlightenment. I shrugged inwardly and proceeded to describe the situation over there as I had left it. I was not long into my remarks

before Captain Endecott began to take over the meeting. While not rude, I found him to be insistent in his questions, when others attempted to engage he showed impatience and appeared to set himself on a pedestal, with a sense of self-importance and I was sure he had a temper that he was attempting to control. To be fair, the Captain's questions were mostly pertinent, they also meant that the meeting lasted a long time. I felt I had been wrung dry by the end. There was an interesting dynamic to the meeting. Endecott's dominant personality became increasingly accepted by a majority of the attendees and with that acceptance his demeanor softened somewhat, with the result that the meeting opened up for more general discussion. At one point, I caught P.'s eye and raised an eyebrow, his shrug was no more than a slight twitch of his shoulders. After the meeting, the Captain came up to me and gave me another firm handshake, staring into my face with a slight frown. I gazed back, relaxed. It seemed we were to be in some kind of mental arm-wrestle. I refused to play and he stepped back, thanked me for the information I had imparted, suggested we might meet again to continue the subject matter, then, turning on his heel, he swept from the room, and Ralph, with an apologetic look to me, hurried after him.

After everyone had left, I walked with P. back to the rectory talking about Endecott. P. had been informed that he would be attending. Apparently he had married the cousin of an acquaintance of P.'s, Matthew Cradock, whom P. had succeeded in persuading to become one of a new group of investors in the New England Company. P. asked me what I thought of him. I said that my first impressions were not particularly favorable, a little too forceful and reminded me a little of another Captain, Standish. I had the feeling that his temper could become agitated quickly if crossed. I asked P. why the interest. He thought that Endecott was being considered as the possible leader of the new group of settlers to be sent to New England. P. admitted that Cradock had needed little persuading, a member of the Skinner's Guild in London, he was anxious to establish an alternative, reliable and direct source for pelts and furs, with La Rochelle

no longer deemed viable. Cradock saw the New England Company as that new source. As a result, he had become active himself in finding investors in London. About the Council for New England, P. said that there was a plan to approach them to obtain a patent covering the land the Company wanted to settle which would include Naumkeag. At the door to the rectory, P. advised me that Cradock was well aware of my reputation which was why Endecott had greeted me the way he did. P. thought that Cradock, Endecott, or both would want to meet with me in the near future. He was clearly optimistic that they would be major players. P. saw the engagement of London businessmen in New England as a most significant development. While a small number of the original Dorchester Company investors wanted to continue to support settlement, there weren't enough. Leaving P. I walked the few steps home, thoughtful. I felt the pressure increasing.

### **Journal entry—February – March 1627**

Through the winter and early spring of 1627, I was aware of a gathering momentum in the interest in New England, both from an investor perspective and from potential settlers. There was much talk but not a great deal of action and such action as there was came from me. I was sought on a regular basis to meet and discuss all matters pertaining to New England, my worm's eye view of the many attempts to develop settlements providing background information. I attempted to downplay my expertise. I was a mere foot soldier, not the most helpful point of view when plotting stratagems. It made no matter, I could paint the landscapes, the people, talk about the life, the weather, the hunting, the flies and mosquitoes, the good and the bad.

Mid-February, I received a note from Mr. Scroud saying that he would be grateful if I would meet with him at my convenience in Plymouth. I wanted to see David Tremaine who was still convalescing there. It provided me with an opportunity to sail on *Swallow*

and talk to J.B. Richard Bushrode had been the active partner in overseeing *Swallow*'s activities and had received regular reports from him. This was a chance for me to find out about *Swallow*'s activities for myself. After making the necessary arrangements, on Monday, 26 February I rode Maddie down to Weymouth to board *Swallow* and sail to Plymouth. It was good to see J.B. and Obi, both seemed well. They were a highly competent team and *Swallow* was in excellent hands. After much general conversation, I asked J.B. for his assessment of their continued commercially successful activities. At first, he was somewhat taciturn but under my questioning opened up. The future did not look particularly bright, *Swallow* regarded as something of a novelty. That novelty had been exploited. *Swallow* was a fast coastal trader, but it had limited carrying capacity and profit came from bulk shipment. The political situation made trading with the Continent difficult. Plymouth Fort had reduced their courier traffic, the military had demanded control and used their own resources.

My first port of call was at Mr. Scroud's office. He was an unhappy man—my conversation with J.B. was a foretaste. He had prepared a detailed analysis of the last 12 months of *Swallow*'s operations, which made dismal reading. By the autumn, business was perceptibly slowing. More problematical, projected business into 1628 looked bad. Clients were falling away, refusing to re-sign long term contracts and discounts were insufficient to entice them. He was concerned about my two partners, Bushrode and Giradeau. Bushrode seemed indifferent and non-responsive, not seen often in Plymouth, while Giradeau's business network with the Huguenots in France was falling apart. The final nail in the coffin, my debts from the loss of *Rosie* required me to liquidate some of my assets. To make matters worse, the owners of the *Argosy* were claiming loss of business. In their opinion, they had been promised a profitable trade with Bilbao, contingent on *Rosie*'s active and shared participation, and a substantial claim had been submitted for restitution. Mr. Scroud had immediately filed a counter claim, stating that *Rosie* was lost due to

the non-appearance of *Argosy*. There matters stood. Mr. Scroud said it would take months to settle, but costs were being incurred by the litigation. There was a silver lining: An offer had been made to purchase *Swallow*—a Dutch interest wanted it for trading in the West Indies.

I went to see David Tremaine. We had arranged to meet at the Minerva around lunch time and he was in the bar when I arrived. Landlord Alfred Potts greeted me as a prodigal son. He organized a table for us in a quiet corner in the snug bar. David was mostly recovered and able to move his arm, thanks, he said, to Kate's nagging attention. The process had been painful and tested their relationship, severely.

"How is it?"

David chose to play dumb.

"You mean my arm? You can see it's in pretty good shape."

He laughed.

"Actually, that is in pretty good shape, too. We have had the time to really get to know each other."

I raised an eyebrow.

"No, not just biblically. Kate wants to continue to farm and has made it plain she wants me to be part of her life."

"What about you?"

"Yes, I want to be part of her life, too. I think I could adapt my thinking to seeing farming as a new and challenging direction. The problem is, right now no one would take me on as a tenant farmer with no experience, nor will anyone accept a woman. Anyway, we both agree that we want our own land."

"David, I remember the last time we talked about Kate, you said she was keen on moving to New England, or at least exploring that notion."

"Yes. I think that is a likely move. However, for me to go with her I want to be sure we are suited to each other."

I laughed. "Suited? Ye Gods, what else do you need to convince yourself?"

David shook his head. “You’re right. In fact, Kate as good as asked me to marry her. I dodged the subject, not too adroitly. However, as you know, she is a most determined lady, I am sure the subject will be raised again.”

“Where is she?”

“Until such time as we are married, Kate will continue to live alone with Beth. Right now they are in Weymouth. I expect her back next week.”

“What are you doing in the meantime?”

“Not a lot. Exercising mostly and trying not to spend any money.”

“What keeps you in Plymouth?”

“Old friends and familiar surroundings, for the most part.”

“Why don’t you pack up and come back with me? If you want to become more comfortable about moving to New England, Dorchester is where most of the debate is happening and Weymouth is just down the road.”

David ruminated.

“You’re right. Kate only comes down to Plymouth to see me, most times leaving Beth behind, which is a real wrench for her.”

Without much further discussion David said he would to come back with me. *Swallow* was due to return to Weymouth on Thursday, in two days. That would give him time enough to sort out his affairs. I told him about the *Argosy* lawsuit and countersuit. He was not amused, having had no response from *Argosy’s* captain in spite of a number of attempts to reach him. I thought it probable that the owners had stopped the captain from making any contact with David in the circumstances. We agreed to meet dockside, first thing Thursday morning.

I left him to go to Henri Giradeau’s office. He was pleased to see me, albeit ruefully. He said he was desolate about my travails and had wept over the loss of life, to bury one’s own daughter, he felt, must be an unendurable horror. I thanked him for his concern and gently changed the subject. We discussed his business. He said his Huguenot contacts were widespread, having developed new trading



partners outside France, in Northern Europe as well as in Canada and Newfoundland. He admitted his need for *Swallow* was gone. He had been in touch with Mr. Scroud and had signaled his interest in selling his share. He had informed Richard Bushrode, whose response had been non-committal. Henri asked me what my plans were. I said that I really didn't know, my financial situation needed careful reassessment. I was advised by Mr. Scroud to accept the offer being made to purchase *Swallow*. With the loss of *Rosie*, I not only had no shipping ownership, I wasn't at all sure I wanted to continue in that line of business. We parted, promising each other we would keep in contact.

Wednesday morning, I went to see John Gorges. Our first meeting since I had returned from the sinking of *Rosie*. He had heard about my other problems and was suitably sympathetic. He apologized for the business he was, now, unable to provide for *Swallow*. I said that circumstances being what they were it was not an issue to be concerned about. I asked after his father. He said Sir F. was still embroiled in attempts to defend England despite the lack of support from town and country, Plymouth in a mess, soldiers encamped, underpaid, under-worked, causing untold grief, and the mayor, Bagg, causing serious issues, undermining Sir F.'s authority with complaints to London. John laughed.

"So, things continue as before, not a comfortable time. However, my father has found some peace of mind in Cornwall."

"Oh?"

"I should not have said that. Suffice to say, he has been a widower too long, we all hope for a happier future."

I asked him what, if anything, was happening with respect to the Council for New England. He said that as far as he knew there was little of note. He was aware that a group of investors had interests in acquiring a patent to settle in New England. He wasn't up to date on that, but said it was a strong rumor and presumably matters would eventually come to a head. Before leaving I asked him to pass on my affectionate greetings to Sir F. The rest of the day I wandered round

Plymouth. It was, indeed, a mess. By the end of the day, I had realized that Annie's desire to leave Plymouth had been an inspiration. The town had changed, much for the worse. I stayed the night at the *Minerva*. Alfred was full of doom and despondency, the country was going to the dogs. He blamed it all on his favorite villain, the Duke of Buckingham, venal, incompetent, and retaining the unlimited power that James had granted him when Charles became King. I retired early to my room. England was heading for increasingly difficult times. It made for grim thoughts about the future.

Next morning pre-dawn, I met up with David at the Pool and we were rowed out to *Swallow*. We were back in Weymouth by nightfall. No matter what happened to *Swallow* I would always miss the speed with which she covered this particular route. I informed J.B. and Obi of our intention to sell *Swallow* and it did not appear likely that the new owners would want to retain the current crew. They were disheartened but I bolstered their spirits somewhat by promising to ensure they would find new positions, pointing out that they had enviable reputations that came from *Swallow's* notoriety. They asked what my intentions were. They too had been caught up in the chatter about emigration. Might there be opportunities for them on the New England trade routes? I said I would surely advise them if anything turned up. Meanwhile, I told them to complete the schedule of trips they were already committed to. I expected it would be a month or so before change of ownership would occur.

David left me to find and surprise Kate. I wished him luck and told him to keep in close contact with me. I returned home, Thursday evening, 1 March. I had been gone four days.

### **Journal entry—April–June 1627**

Momentum continued to build in the speculation about and planning of a move to New England. P. on several occasions had attempted to enlist my services to lead the local group of settlers. They

needed someone to make decisions and bring everyone together to a common purpose. I had responded, repeatedly, that I would not countenance another transatlantic trip. I had promised Annie that I would never leave her again for such an extended period. I had not been keeping a close ear on Annie's conversations on the same subject. When I asked her what she had been up to, she said little about the conversations she had been having with her friends. I could tell that whatever they were they left her thoughtful and I assumed she was concerned that people she had become close to might be leaving forever, a sad thought.

I was occupied in sorting out my financial situation. By the end of April, *Swallow* had been sold and the new owners asked her existing crew to sail her to Barbados, to arrive there by 1 September. It would be an interesting voyage. The trip to Bermuda and back identified the risks. It showed *Swallow* to be seaworthy in a storm and fast enough to avoid pirates. The new owners were happy to have her complete a number of already scheduled trading voyages, as they would receive the profits. It meant that the crew had time to plan for a future, post-*Swallow*.

I had to return to Plymouth for a few days. Annie and I rode Tess and Maddie down there in May, we travelled gently and in the company of others, for cross country journeys were becoming increasingly dangerous, a sign of the times. Our steeds were becoming elderly, they were happy to be out and about but welcomed regular rest in well provisioned stables on the way. James and Abigail were staying with close family friends. To them, our departure was a holiday. On the way down, it gave us the chance to explore our feelings about where we were in our life and what the events of the past six months meant to our future—was it God's retribution or just circumstance?

We were able to clarify a misconception on my part. Far from being entirely opposed to my making a journey back to New England, Annie wanted to go too. She had heard so much from me, it was a part of my life of which she had no direct knowledge, leaving a hole in our life together and she needed to fill it. She admitted that

she and Jeannie had had numerous conversations about it. Jeannie had become excited about the proposition and said she and Johnny would, if we so desired, follow us wherever we went. I obviously needed to talk to Johnny. The more Annie and I talked the more we both came to recognize that the gathering enthusiasm for New England among our friends and P.'s pressure on me were sweeping us up in its wake. By the time we reached Plymouth some four days later we were of one mind and prepared to consider such a move with some enthusiasm. My business interests needed a total reassessment. By focusing on New England, I would be able to channel my evaluation of the opportunities and Annie would be able to participate more wholeheartedly in the conversations with her friends.

Sir F. was in Plymouth. I went to see him, to an especially warm greeting. I avoided asking him about his political and military problems. I was sure they were the last things he wanted to talk about. Instead, we talked about New England. He was interested to hear of P.'s continued commitment to supporting the right sort of settlement. He said he had given up attempting to protect the patent given to Robert, it hadn't been settled so he had nothing to show. Rather, he talked of the land he shared with John Mason north of Cape Ann, in Maine. He had no idea when he would have the time to focus on exploitation of that territory and he hoped that there would be no challenge to his ownership in the meantime. He had talked to his son, John, about him moving there, as Governor, and succeeding unlike his brother Robert. However, nothing could be done for the foreseeable future. Sir F. was intrigued at the thought of the Stanfield family moving to New England. He would certainly look to have us help him as and when John did make a move. John would need my help, he said. I did not speak, even indirectly, of Sir F.'s personal life. Instead, he, a little shyly, admitted that he hoped before long to remarry. I congratulated him and suggested he had been a widower too long to which he agreed. He talked of Aby with great fondness before apologizing and asking questions of Annie's and my life together. He expressed deep sorrow at the loss of Miranda. He observed that

the business losses I had suffered, although regrettable, were a part of the education of a successful businessman. To learn and recover from such losses was what was important, saying he had all the marks and scars to prove his point. When we parted he asked that I correspond with him on a regular basis. He promised to do the same.

Then to Mr. Scroud. He had had to liquidate some of my assets, including most of the investment I had made in Sir F.'s now lacklustre business activities. He had done as much damage control as possible and had moved what I had into a low risk, low yield trading partnership which would provide me with regular income sufficient to cover my current expenses. He had set aside capital to begin rebuilding my fortune, but it would be slow and I should be patient. I thanked him and returned to the Minerva.

Annie had attempted to visit her old friends and had made her way to St. Andrews escorted by two men assigned by her uncle. She was horrified at the crowds, the noise, the filth, and the destitution of so many people and returned to the Minerva, staying there till I returned. A group of riders were due to leave for Exeter the following morning and we decided to take advantage of their company. We left before first light, anxious to breathe fresh air in the open countryside. By the time we returned to Dorchester, we were convinced that we should remove ourselves from England. Plymouth was a harbinger, England was being misgoverned, Parliament increasingly at odds with King Charles. Poverty and lawlessness were everywhere, religious intolerance was growing. King James had been bad, Charles was worse, and we saw no possibility of any change for the better.

### **Journal entry—*July – September 1627***

Annie and I were now comfortable with the knowledge that we would accompany our friends to New England and with that the realization that we needed to dispose of Barrow Farm. We would have preferred to sell it with all contents included but, if necessary,

we would rent it fully furnished on a long term let. Will advised that the latter would be more likely. In the current political uncertainty, money was tight and people were not wanting to commit to a permanent residence. On the other hand, some town dwellers were looking to move out into the country. Mr. Scroud undertook to have the property placed on the market.

P. reacted to our decision with mixed feelings, pleased that my experience would be available to the settlers, unhappy that I refused to take any leadership role in the enterprise, accepting that our decision to move to New England was to make a new life for ourselves. Our responsibilities were to face the challenges of the new world as a tightly knit family. We did not want those responsibilities overwhelmed by a broader set of obligations.

I had had a number of meetings at which Captain Endecott was present. My first impressions had not changed substantially. He had the over-weaned self-confidence to convince Matthew Cradock and the investor group that he should be the leader and I was determined to distance myself from his direct authority when appropriate. Endecott aside, there was a building excitement in the community during the summer and into the autumn, an excitement that was not diminished by the terrible weather. Spring had been dry, and once the weather turned it stayed wet, then wet and windy all summer. Johnny and I had talked. Once he knew my position, he became a constant promoter and enthusiast. In fact, he talked of little else until I had to turn off the flow.

I had the opportunity to meet with Richard Bushrode. He had been dismayed by the way fate had dealt me so many blows and he had been directly affected by the loss of *Rosie* and now the sale of *Swallow*, but these were tangential to his other business interests. Rather he felt that for a young man like me the misfortunes could break me. We talked a great deal about our respective circumstances. By the end he said he was much relieved, he thought our intentions to move to New England were the right ones, not only for ourselves but, he said, a major benefit to the attempts to establish a successful

settlement in Naumkeag. He was doubtful that Endecott was the right man to lead and hoped my influence would offset his more destructive tendencies. I promised nothing but thanked him for his kind words.

We all awaited the London investors to reach agreement on their commitments and objectives. Once those were settled, a formal application could be made for a patent from the Council for New England. I understood their intent was to obtain land between the Charles and the Merrimack rivers, land already assigned to Robert Gorges, as well as the land the Dorchester Company had been granted. I was aware that Sir F. had told me he had washed his hands of Robert's patent but I wondered how he would react if, in fact, the land was subsumed within the new patent. I kept my concerns to myself.

One bright spot to lighten the miserable weather was the wedding of David and Kate. They were married in early August in Weymouth, Annie and I were invited to be witnesses which we were delighted to accept. It was a small wedding with only a few attendees, followed by the four of us having a celebratory dinner at the Kings Arms, after which Annie and I rode home, leaving the newlyweds to their own private celebrations. David and Kate, with Beth, had committed to moving to New England. We agreed that come the day we would stay close and keep our collective options open about what we would do once we got there. We agreed to pay our way over, not wanting to be seen as obligated to the Company, let alone be deemed indentured. Now came the waiting.

### **Journal entry—*October 1627 – June 1628***

The next months were special to us as a family. I had few distractions to take me away, a five-day trip to London being the longest time I was absent. We were able to focus on planning for our expedition to America. James, now attending the Free School, took it upon

himself to educate Abigail about all matters pertaining to sailing on a big ship across the Atlantic and all the extraordinary people and places they would be experiencing. He and Beth had struck up a close friendship, Beth, a year older, but James more mature. She looked up to him as the elder brother she lost with Davey's death, at the same time becoming the big sister for Abigail. James had weathered the wild adventures of his early childhood incredibly well, self-assured, comfortable with everyone no matter their age and social standing. Rather than being traumatized by his experiences, he had embraced them. For that, I owed an enormous debt of gratitude to Ezra Garcia back in Bermuda. No situation surprised or frightened him. Among his peers, he was a natural leader, treated with affection and respect. Silas had spent hours with him teaching him how to take care of himself. He hated bullying, and the older boys were wary of goading youngsters when James was around. He refused to back down, fearless, tall for his age, he was accepted by all as a formidable opponent. Unhappily, my old teacher, Robert Cheeke died in October. I would have loved to have had James begin his school career under his care.

Christmas came. We spent it, knowing it would be our last in England. Many of our friends not leaving were inclined to sorrow while the settlers amongst us were determined to ensure these Twelve nights would never be forgotten, by anyone.

Mid-February, 1628 I was asked to attend a meeting at Cornhill in London. It was a meeting of the 40 or so adventurers or investors that had contributed a total of £3,000 to support the New England Company settlement. Several present I knew from Dorchester or had met previously—Richard Bushrode was there, as were Mr. Cradock and Captain Endecott. Richard took me aside and told me that he had expressly requested my presence. He was going to have Mr. Cradock inform his fellow investors that the share Richard had purchased would be in the care of Isaac Stanfield, who would be given full authority to hold, manage, and receive any and all benefits accruing. I was amazed and thanked him. He smiled and said it was little recompense for all my losses, admitting that it meant his interests



would be well protected. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Cradock. He introduced Captain Endecott as the appointed leader of the settlement who would have the title of Governor and given full requisite authority. He then introduced those few present who would be going as settlers, I was introduced last. He told the assembly that I would be asked to speak about my experiences in New England. However, he wanted Captain Endecott to speak about his intentions first. The good Captain, given the platform and captive audience talked for about an hour. I found it difficult to concentrate after the first few minutes. His self-importance and lack of any real understanding of what to expect became too distracting. I glanced at Richard who stared straight ahead, grim of visage. I could read his thoughts, and they weren't positive ones.

For the most part the attendees listened with keen interest. These were businessmen, presumably used to salesmen selling themselves as much as their wares, able to focus on what they wanted to hear. I did catch one remark which worried me. Endecott stated that he would be taking over the people and possessions already there, the Dorchester Company having transferred full ownership of all their assets to the New England Company meant that they would all be under his absolute authority. To the rest of the attendees this seemed logical, to me it sounded like a potential crisis. Not all the people or possessions had been sent over by the Dorchester Company. I kept my mouth shut, preferring to discuss this with P. who would know better than Endecott what the exact details of the transfer of assets were.

Endecott then introduced me as one of his assistants. Ignoring the reference, I spoke for a few minutes and was cut short by Endecott. Not wishing to cause friction I stepped back. Several investors were unsatisfied and asked me questions and again Endecott attempted to control the proceedings. I looked over at Cradock. He caught my eye and gave a barely perceptible shrug of his shoulders. The meeting ended and before I could leave I was stopped and quickly surrounded, questions came thick and fast. Endecott attempted to break

through the cordon round me, demanding that any enquiries should be referred to him, not his assistant. In a moment of irritation, I took Endecott by the elbow and pushed through the throng to a corner.

“Captain Endecott, I am not now nor ever will be your assistant. I choose not to make a fool out of you in front of the people here, but do not push me. I am able to help you in your adventure if you decide you want it, but on my terms.”

With that I let go of his elbow and walked away. Leaving the room I looked back, he was rubbing his elbow with a scowl on his face.

I left for Dorchester the following day, happy to be back. I visited P. and reported to him what had happened at the meeting. He admitted concern about Endecott’s willful nature but expressed the hope that once in Naumkeag he would realize that the situation was not what he imagined and would have the intelligence if not the grace to deal with it. It was difficult to argue with someone who saw Divine Will in everything.

We moved closer to our departure date. The patent had been signed. The vessel to transport us had been chartered, the *Abigail*, much to our daughter’s delight. We had initially planned to set sail in mid-May. Unfortunately, the gathering of the 40 or so passengers from London and the West Country took longer to accomplish than originally planned and the final date was fixed for 20 June, 1628. Ralph and Joanna Sprague, with Ralph’s two brothers, would be sailing with us. The Tremaines weren’t able to find room and planned to sail in the spring of 1629.

Will and I went for a long ride, my final ride on Maddie. Will and I were saying goodbye. We both felt it might be the last time we saw each other. It was all so sad. We talked about our childhood, the different lives we had led, and our families. Will, perhaps for the first time talked about the loss of so many of his children, admitting that a piece of him died with each one. Thinking of Miranda, I understood and felt his pain. Barrow Farm had not been disposed of despite Mr. Scroud’s efforts and Will said he would do what he could to help us

find a buyer, but we were not to worry, he would take care of it. He felt that he should be able to offer it for people looking for short term rent. I told him to consider it a business venture, any and all income resulting he should keep as a fee for service. Before we parted, he made me promise that I would continue my journal and keep sending a copy back to him. He said his was a humdrum life and lived vicariously through what I wrote. He had put everything I had given him into a small chest, embossed with the title “The Isaac Stanfield Chronicles”.

The day before we left, the Stanfield family, Johnny, and Jeannie all went to say goodbye to Maddie and Tess, who were retired to a country estate just outside Dorchester where the owner bred horses and continued caring for many that had finished their working life, while Daisy and Daniel had been given a good home with a local farmer who had young children. For me, it was a dreadful wrench. Maddie, followed by faithful Tess, came to the rail of the paddock. We touched noses, Maddie blowing a gentle, sweet breath on me. I stroked her soft chin. I whispered my thanks and farewell with tears in my eyes and a huge lump in my throat.

On 20 June, we sailed from Weymouth. Annie and I, James and Abigail, in Annie’s arms, watched England slipping away from us. Annie with unsuppressed excitement about this new adventure and what the future had in store for us; me torn, sad to be leaving my past behind, concerned about the challenges waiting for us at Naumkeag, but overriding those thoughts was the euphoria of having my family with me on this culminating Atlantic crossing. Our new life had begun.



— ABOUT THE AUTHOR —

DAVID TORY has sailed the coast of Massachusetts and Maine for 30 years. He brings other settings alive through his familiarity with Dorset, England, and his intimate knowledge of Bermuda and its waters. Years of research give his books a firm grounding in historic facts and figures while allowing his imagination to use his fictional characters to tell a compelling story of the turbulent early history of New England. Background information on that history can be found on [www.DavidToryAuthor.com](http://www.DavidToryAuthor.com).



