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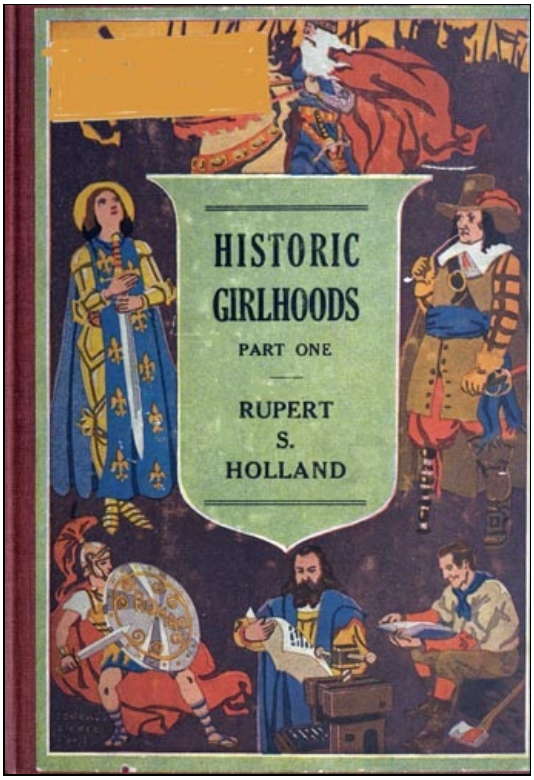

Joan of Arc

# Historic Girlhoods

**(Part One)**

**By**
**RUPERT S. HOLLAND**
***Author of "Historic Boyhoods," "Historic Events of Colonial Days," etc., etc.***

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These stories in general follow the actual records of history, but in a few cases, where little was known of certain girls, the author has felt at liberty to add incidents illustrating the characters and the times.

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*To*
*my sister*
*LUCY*

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# I

## St. Catherine

## The Girl of Siena: 1347-1380

The old Italian city of Siena lies upon three hills, on one of which gleams the great white Cathedral, and on another perches the scarcely less commanding Church of San Domenico. In the fourteenth century underwood and hanging gardens crept up the sides of these hills, with only a narrow winding road to lead from one part of the city to another. The valley lying between the two hills that were crowned with churches was known as the Valle Piatta, and a little way up one slope stood the small stone-built house of a dyer named Giacomo Benincasa. On the opposite hillside lived his married daughter Bonaventura, and Giacomo's wife often sent her two youngest children, Stephen and Catherine, through the valley on errands to their sister's house. Their message to Bonaventura safely delivered the children were free to play in the valley or pick flowers or rest by the roadside as long as they chose.

One summer afternoon Catherine, who was a small girl with dark hair and eyes, felt drowsy with the warm airs of the lowlands and loitered behind her brother as they were returning from Bonaventura's. He went on, humming a tune of the goatherds. She, stopping under a tree for shade, looked down a little path that led to a fountain called the Fontebranda, where most of the people of Siena got their water. Then she looked up across the hillsides of vineyards and hanging gardens to the cliff where the Church of San Domenico shone very white in the brilliant sunlight. She looked, and rubbed her eyes, and looked again. Then her amazement vanished and she simply stood still, rapt in a kind of ecstasy, which would not permit her to doubt what she saw nor turn her eyes away.

As she stood there entranced, she saw a great throne set upon the very roof of the Church of San Domenico, and on that throne sat the Christ and about Him were grouped the figures of many saints. As she looked the figure on the throne stretched out His right hand and made the sign of the cross over her, as she had seen the Bishop do when he gave his people his blessing. The eyes of the other saints were fixed upon her as though they had a special interest in her, and in turn each of them made her the sign of blessing. The vision held her spellbound, and although people on foot and in wagons passed along the road near where she stood, she did not turn nor pay any attention to them. She seemed to have forgotten everything except the vision high up on the hill.

Stephen had gone on along the road, thinking that his sister was following. After a time he spoke to her, but received no answer. Then he turned around and to his surprise found she was not in sight. He walked back until he caught sight of her standing beneath the tree. "Catherine!" he called. She made no reply. He could not understand why she stood so still, gazing steadily up into the sky. He went nearer, and spoke again. She did not answer, so he took her hand and said, "Tell me, Catherine, what are you doing? Why do you stop here?"

The girl moved, and slowly turned her head, as though she had just been waked from a sound sleep. "Oh, Stephen, if you had but seen what I saw, you wouldn't have disturbed me so," she said slowly. Again she looked up to the Church of San Domenico, but now the vision was gone, and there were only the white walls gleaming in the sunshine.

"What was it, Catherine? Please tell me," begged Stephen.

"Nay, I cannot. 'Tis a secret," she answered. In spite of his pleading and his curiosity she would not tell him. Shaking her head at all his questions she went up the road with him to their father's house.

Supper caused Stephen to forget his sister's strange actions, but it had no such effect on the little girl herself. She felt that she would never forget the miracle, and as soon as she was alone she tried to remember exactly how the vision had looked to her. She found that she could recall it, and she loved to do so, and to wonder what was its message.

In that age the Church and wars occupied much of the people's minds, and little Catherine was already familiar with the stories of many of the saints and of the customs and manners of the Church. Her father was a well-known and respected citizen of Siena, a prosperous man, but in no way especially religious. Her mother had been too much occupied with caring for her large family to give much thought to the Church. So Catherine decided that neither of them would understand her vision, and determined to keep it a secret. But she thought over it much of the time until she finally decided that it meant she was to lead a different sort of life from that of her brothers and sisters and playmates. Thereupon she began to wonder what it was best for her to do.

Her first desire was to leave the bustling turbulent city of Siena and seek out some place in the wilderness where she might be alone and live like the ancient hermits. She planned how she would go, and early one morning set out, prudently carrying a loaf of bread in a bag under her arm. She went down through the Valle Piatta and past her sister's house until she came to one of the city gates. She had never been outside the walls of Siena before, and she hesitated as she stood there, thinking of the wild and unprotected country that lay beyond. But Catherine was brave, and she hesitated only a moment, and then went through the gate and out into the country.

At that time there were bandits and robbers and troops of marauding soldiers all through the hills and valleys of Italy, and people rarely ventured beyond the city walls. Catherine, however, held to the road, passing an occasional solitary house where some goat-herd or farmer lived. At last a brook tempted her to leave the highway and follow along its course, and in time it brought her to a cave made by a shelving rock that came close down to the bank of the stream. This seemed just the place for a hermit's home, and she went into the cave and fell upon her knees to

give thanks that she had been brought safely to this refuge. Again she fell into a trance, as she had done on the day when she saw the vision. She thought she heard voices which told her that though she was to lead a different life from her friends she must do her work among people and not alone in the wilderness, and bade her go home before her father and mother should think she was lost.

When she had heard this counsel Catherine rose and went out of the cave. She looked back along the path by which she had come; it seemed a long way home to Siena and she felt tired and warm. She sat down on the bank of the brook and ate some of the bread she had brought with her and then fell asleep. When she woke she was rested, and jumping up hurried back to the road so that she might reach the gate by sunset. She came to the city walls in time to pass through the gate just before the guard closed it for the night, and went straight on to her father's house. Fortunately her parents had not been worried by her absence, supposing she had been spending the day at her sister's.

Giacomo Benincasa and his wife Lapa had had thirteen children, and they did not suspect that their youngest daughter Catherine was in any way different from her sisters. They knew she was a very quiet girl, rather shy, fond of going to the great Cathedral on top of the hill and of talking with any nuns or friars whom she met. She was pretty, with long brown hair that many people admired, and they expected to marry her to the son of some one of their well-to-do friends. The other girls had all been married early, according to the Italian custom of those times, and Catherine was barely twelve years old when her father and mother began to consider what favorable marriage they might make for her. Her mother urged her to give more attention to her dress, to take more care in arranging her hair, to wear some jewelry she had bought for her, and to go about more with boys and girls of her own age. But Catherine did not want to do any of these things. She became more shy than ever, and when she met any of her father's young apprentices she turned and ran away as fast as she could. The mother knew that Catherine was devoted to her older sister Bonaventura, and begged her to try to persuade Catherine to do as other girls did. Bonaventura talked to her little sister, and finally Catherine agreed to wear brighter and more becoming dresses and to rub certain oils into her hair to give it a peculiar light golden color which was then considered more beautiful than the natural dark shade. But it was only a few weeks before Catherine decided that these changes were all vanity, and went back to her old quiet dresses and simple way of wearing her long hair.

Now the good dyer and his wife realized that their little daughter was peculiar, and they went to Father Thomas della Fonte, a friar preacher who knew Catherine well, and begged him to talk to her. Father Thomas spent an afternoon with her, and to him the girl opened her heart and told of the vision she had seen and of her wish to become a sister of one of the religious orders of the church. He saw that her mind was set upon this wish, and did not try to dissuade her from it. "My dear daughter," he said, "I believe you have chosen the better part, and may our Lord give you grace to follow it. And now if you think well to follow my counsel, I would advise you to cut off your hair, which will prove to your parents that they must give up all hopes of your marriage, and will also save you the time that must needs be spent upon its care and adornment."

Catherine decided to take his advice at once, and so that same evening she locked herself in her room and cut off all her hair. In order to hide what she had done she covered her head with a coif, which was sometimes worn by grown women but never by girls as young as she. Next morning at breakfast her mother saw the coif and stared at her. "Why have you that on your head?" she asked in surprise. Catherine murmured some answer which her mother could not understand. Madame Lapa stepped forward and seizing the white headdress pulled it off. She saw that Catherine's beautiful hair was gone, and she gave a cry of anger which brought the rest of the family into the room. They were all indignant, and her father and brothers spoke harshly to her. "Your will must be curbed," said Giacomo. "You shall not do whatever you wish, no matter how absurd it may be, and so bring scorn upon all of us. You must do as your sisters have done."

Catherine appealed to her brothers. "I have no wish to anger any of you," she said. "I care nothing what you do with me, nor would I be a charge to any of you. I will live on bread and water and never ask anything better if only I may be let to live in peace without thought of other people."

Giacomo, however, would not yield to what he considered her caprices. His wife and sons agreed that Catherine was both obstinate and foolish and must be taught to do as she was told. Giacomo said, "I know what's the cause of this trouble. You have too much time to spend on your knees in prayer and you go to your room and think of strange things when you should be with the others. Hereafter you shan't have any room of your own, and you shall do the housework to keep from dreaming all day long."

His order was carried out. To show Catherine how little they thought of her fancies Madame Lapa dismissed the kitchen-maid, and Catherine was made to take her place and do all the household drudgery. Each of the family took every possible opportunity to reproach her for her obstinacy, and her father and mother talked to her by the hour at a time, seeking to bring her to what they considered a more sensible state of mind.

Catherine went about the housework faithfully. During the day she would occasionally find a chance to rest for a time in her brother Stephen's room while he was away, and at night she would sleep wherever she could find a bed. Often she simply curled up in a chair in the living-room. Through all this hard treatment she was patient and uncomplaining, until finally her sweetness and constancy began to amaze her parents and lead them to believe that perhaps she was different from other girls and must be allowed to follow her own path. Once they had reached this conclusion Giacomo called the family together and told them that although he and his wife had hoped that Catherine would marry as her sisters had, they saw that she had set her heart on the life of a nun, and that henceforth she was to do as she wished.

In that age hardship and privation were usually considered necessary to goodness. Catherine was so intent on meriting the virtue which her visions had seemed to predict for her that she allowed herself no comforts. More than

that she made herself endure many hardships. She took for her room a small cell under her father's house, lighted by only one window. Her bed was made of a few planks with a log of wood for a pillow. Here she felt herself to be as much alone as though she were a hermit in the woods, and here she spent hours in meditation and in reciting long prayers. She wore rough clothes and she gradually trained herself to do with very little sleep and almost no food. She got to the point where she allowed herself only a half hour's sleep at a time and could live on a little bread, some raw herbs, and a cup of water. She had been very strong, but this severe way of living told greatly on her health.

Her mother, however, was much disturbed at these hardships which Catherine insisted on imposing upon herself, and tried to win her to a more healthful life. She begged her to give up her hard wood bed and sleep with her. Catherine did not want to vex her by refusing, and agreed to this, but as soon as her mother was asleep she slipped out of bed and stole down-stairs to her own chamber. She was back again before her mother woke. After a night or two of this Madame Lapa discovered the ruse, and begged Catherine to stay in bed with her. Thereupon the girl arranged two pieces of wood under the sheet so that she would have to lie on them, thinking she would discipline herself in this way. It was evident that she would have her own will, and so at last her mother gave in. "Daughter," she said, "I see well it boots not for me to strive with you any longer. It is but time wasted. Go your way and rest at whatever times and in what manner you will."

Catherine was so determined to imitate the early saints of the Church, who had in many cases seemed to win virtue by the pains they endured, that she now took to beating herself with rods and wearing a sharp-pointed chain underneath her dress. She did all these things in the hope that she might one day be considered worthy to join the order of Sisters of the Blessed Dominic.

These new hardships were too much for her strength and she became ill. Her good mother, more disturbed than ever, insisted on taking her daughter to the baths of Vignone, which were famous for the healing effect of the sulphur in the water. On the very first day Catherine placed herself under the spout where the sulphurous water came scalding hot into the bath, and standing there suffered silently greater pains from the hot water than she had been able to inflict upon herself at home. Madame Benincasa, upbraiding her daughter for what seemed to her the sheerest madness, brought her back to Siena, and there Catherine, worn out and only a shadow of her former strong self, took to her bed for a time.

While she was still sick she begged her parents to intercede with the Sisters of Penance and learn if they would not admit her to their order as a novice. Giacomo and Lapa, now realizing that their extraordinary daughter would be happy in no other kind of life, went to the Sisters with this request. They were told that it was contrary to all the customs of the Sisters to admit young girls. The parents pleaded, and finally some of the Sisters agreed to go to Benincasa's house to see his daughter. They found Catherine very thin and pale, and listened to her story of how she had long before renounced all the pleasures and vanities of this world. She talked so earnestly that the Sisters were convinced, and as a result agreed a little later that she should be admitted to their number. At this news Catherine wept for joy, and gave fervent thanks to St. Dominic, praying that she might soon be well enough to receive the holy mantle of the Sisterhood. Her joy soon brought back her health, and shortly she was able to be out again, and to take the vows required of one who entered the Order, or the Mantellate, as the Sisters were called from the black mantle which they habitually wore. This was in 1364, when she was about seventeen years old.

After that Catherine spent several years largely in solitude, although her passion for flowers led her to cultivate a little garden, and her desire to read the writings of the Church caused her to study reading. She had never learned this at home, but now she asked one of the Sisters to teach her the alphabet, and when she had learned that, she set to work to learn to read. After many weeks of hard study she was finally able to say that she could read the various Offices of the Church.

If Catherine Benincasa had continued her life as a Sister of Penance she would have been simply one of many women who have dedicated their lives to withdrawing from the world and following the course of their own thoughts. She would have left no record of her works behind her nor would she have had much influence on her time. But as it happened she became a great influence, one of the most remarkable women of her century in Europe, and the person of whom the old city of Siena was most proud. She was continually seeing visions of what she was to do, and she followed their commands without hesitation. As a result she accomplished many remarkable things, most of which would have seemed impossible to even the strongest woman.

After a year or two in the convent she was bidden to go back to her father's house and serve there. One of her brothers had given up the dyer's trade and gone to the wars. He had led a wild life and finally been severely wounded and left for dead on the field of battle. In some manner he reached home. Catherine took care of him, and by her skilful nursing and her hopefulness brought him back to health. Her married sisters now had large families of their own, and Catherine delighted to care for the little children. At the same time she went out continually to nurse any of the neighbors who were ill or console them if they were in trouble, and so her reputation for self-sacrifice and charity spread through Siena, and people sent to her father's house begging that Catherine pray for them. Word of her visions and of messages given her directly by the saints was at the same time passed from mouth to mouth, and the devout of the city came to stand outside the house in the hope of seeing something of these miracles themselves.

In that superstitious age the stories of cures Catherine had effected by her skill at nursing were readily magnified into miracles, and although she was very young she was treated by all Siena with the greatest veneration. This was particularly fortunate for her family, for shortly after she had come home a new civil war broke out, and two factions of the citizens waged relentless war upon each other. Catherine's brothers were all on the side of the Twelve, as the leaders of one party were called, and the fortunes of the strife went against them. Their enemies determined to rid the city of all the defeated families, and many were killed or wounded. A friend of the Benincasa family came in haste to their house. "The whole band of your enemies is coming here to seize you!" he cried. "Come with me at once, and I will take you to the Church of St. Anthony by a secret way, where some of our friends have already taken refuge."

Catherine rose from her seat, and said, "There is no need of that." She flung on her mantle and turned to her brothers. "Now, come with me, and fear nothing," said she. They followed, and she led them straight through the main square of the city, which was held by their enemies. When these angry and excited men saw Catherine they bowed to her reverently and moved aside so that she and her brothers might pass. She led them to the Hospital of Saint Mary, and recommended them to the care of the Master of the hospital, and said to them, "Stay concealed here for three days, and then you can come home in safety." They did as she told them, and when the three days had passed the city was quiet again, but all those of their party who had taken refuge at St. Anthony's had either been killed or thrown into prison, and Catherine's brothers were almost the only men of the party of the Twelve in Siena who came safely through the civil strife.

In May, 1374, Catherine went to the city of Florence in company with some other Sisters of Penance, and when she returned to Siena it was to find her home town suffering from the double calamity of famine and pestilence, evils which were only too common in those days. Never before had the plague raged so violently there. Panic seized the people, and all the wealthy sought safety in flight, leaving the poor in their distress with no one to help them. Family after family fell ill, until it seemed as though the whole city were in the hospitals. Catherine worked day and night, encouraging the other Sisters to do likewise, going into the most infected parts of the city, and with never a thought for her own safety. Many of those who were saved owed their lives directly to Catherine's ceaseless care, and as soon as they were well they told how she had nursed them; so the word spread that she had again performed miracles and that her touch was curing in itself. At the same time she saw that the scanty store of provisions in Siena was carefully used, instead of squandered as was the custom, and so word went far and wide that she had performed other miracles, such as multiplying loaves of bread and doubling casks of wine. The fame of this wonderful woman spread to Pisa and Florence, and so through Italy, and already pilgrims came to see her and sufferers to beg her to lay her hands on them and cure them.

Italy was at that time the prey of innumerable warring factions. Each city had its powerful families who were trying to make themselves lords and tyrants of their homes. The Catholic Church had been divided by what was called the Great Schism, and the Pope no longer lived at Rome, but had established his residence at the city of Avignon in Provence. The Pope and the Emperor were continually fighting for the control of the different cities of Italy, and the people would side first with one and then with the other. Catherine's name was now so well known that she was urged to help hold the cities to the Church, and with that object she traveled through Tuscany, trying to settle disputes and put an end to the many civil wars. She also urged men to go upon a great crusade against the Saracens which was being planned, and she won over not only Italian soldiers but foreigners as well to this cause. She was invited to visit Florence again to settle disputes there, and, obedient as ever to the call of what she considered her duty she rode to that city, being met at the gates by all the principal men, who showed her the greatest respect and besought her to make peace among the people. She spent some time there, visiting the sick, talking with the warlike, and healing bodies and minds by her sympathy and spirit of self-sacrifice.

All Italian patriots wanted the Pope to come back from Avignon to Rome, and Catherine believed that his return was necessary for the welfare of Italy. So, when her work at Florence was done, she set out for Avignon, to see the Pope, Gregory XI. She found Avignon a gay and wealthy city, and the Pope and cardinals well pleased with the great palace they had built upon a cliff high above the river Rhone. The city was safe from the wars which were devastating the rest of Europe and especially Italy, and none of the papal court were anxious to give up their luxurious and comfortable life there for the turbulence and trials of Rome. Among these pleasure-loving people arrived the simple black-clad Catherine, a somewhat strange figure in a city which boasted of its extravagance and pride. She was too famous now for the courtiers to disregard her, but they spoke bitter words of her behind her back and tried to prevent her accomplishing her purpose. The Pope was anxious to see her, and she met him, and told him how much he was needed in Italy. He, much impressed by her words, promised to give the matter due thought. She did not stay long, but in the short time she was there she won over many of the vain court and convinced the people that what she wished was right. Gregory was more moved by her appeal than by any that had been made to him before, and a little while after she left he took courage, outfaced the timid and slothful cardinals, and moved his seat back to the city by the Tiber.

For the rest of Catherine's life she was practically the patron saint of Italy. Wherever the plague raged there she went and nursed the sick; wherever there was strife she appeared to try to calm the waters. She won her great reputation by the actual good works that she did, but people were so fond of ascribing miracles to her that she came to seem really more than human. After her death she was officially proclaimed a saint by the Catholic Church, but before that Italy had come to believe her such a being.

In Siena to-day Catherine's house is regarded as a sacred place, and all through that quaint medieval city there are relics and reminders of her. She is the greatest daughter of that city, and one of the greatest of Italy. We must remember that she lived in a superstitious age, and that events which we might explain in a natural way the people of that age preferred to regard as miracles. We cannot understand the feeling which drove Catherine, even as a girl, to rejoice in sufferings that she inflicted on herself, but we can appreciate the spirit of devotion to what she thought her duty which led her into so many strange and difficult paths. It is a singular story, and one in which it is very hard to distinguish between what was actually true and what was legendary, but we do know that this girl whom history has called St. Catherine of Siena grew to be a heroic woman, an angel of mercy to the sick and suffering of her day and an inspiration to nobler living in that bitter and warlike age.

## II

### Joan of Arc

### The Girl of Domremy: 1412-1431

A girl of thirteen, dark-haired, dark-eyed, clad in a simple gown of white caught at the waist by a yellow girdle, sat listening to a small boy who, stretched at her feet, was trying to make music on a willow pipe. A sunny valley lay rolled out before her, and near at hand a dozen well-fed cows were lazily chewing grass. The girl's seat was a moss-covered stone, about her were clumps of flaming red poppies and farther away was a sea of sky-blue corn-flowers. She herself was burned by the sun until her face and hands were a rich orange brown.

The boy threw down his pipe of willow. "'Tis broken, Joan, split at the side. I know a better willow tree by the Meuse. I'll cut some wands there come Sunday, and make thee a pipe will play a rare farandole like the minstrels used to play at Domremy Fair."

"Father says there'll be no more fairs in Domremy, Philippe. He says we're all like to lose our homes these days. He says the English are surely coming for us, and we'll be driven out of France into the sea."

Philippe sat up and crossing his legs rested his elbows on his knees. His round blue eyes were very serious. "The curé says the English are devils, Joan. He crosses himself when they are but named to him, and I heard him tell my mother she should pray to the holy statue of Saint Margaret in the church and offer her a full quarter of her spinning that I fall not in their hands."

"My sister Catherine says they have heads like savage beasts; and she is twenty and old enough to know," said Joan.

The boy flipped a bold grasshopper from his knee and leaned closer towards the girl.

"'Tis only Saint Michael can defeat them, Joan," he said in a half whisper. "I saw his picture on a shield the other night, and father says 'twas he who drove the English from his mount in Normandy, the one they call the Mount at Peril of the Sea."

The girl nodded her head. "I dream of Saint Michael, all clad in shining silver, some fast days, Philippe. He comes and looks at me, and when I wake up I can still see his eyes."

Joan had bent forward, and was gazing fixedly at the picture before her, the valley of rich meadows crossed by the sluggish waters of the river in a dozen channels, the ridge of forest-crowned hills beyond and to one side the red-tiled roofs of the little town of Domremy. "When the soldiers come again, and are like to burn our home I'll pray to good Saint Michael, Philippe. He may hear me."

"He might," agreed the boy. Then he lost interest in the saints. "When it's Jacque's turn to tend the cattle wilt thou go to that tree I know of and help me cut some pipes? I'll show thee a finch's nest close by too."

"Any day. And mayhap we'll find some rushes. Mother says she'll teach me to weave them in a mat. The floor's so cold come winter."

From the village church came the notes of the soft-voiced bell proclaiming noon. Joan rose and smoothed the creases in her simple homespun dress. "I must be going home now," said she. "I promised Catherine I'd help her with the baking. Look, the red heifer's straying. Thou'd best drive her back. Good-morrow, Philippe."

"Good-bye, Joan." The boy got to his feet and ran after the heifer who had deserted the rest of the herd. He looked back over his shoulder once and waved his hand to the girl.

Joan went slowly across the fields to the village. She was strong for her age, but a fast day, and this was one, always made her drowsy about noon. Moreover the sun was very warm and she wore no hat. She passed the scattered houses that made up the little town and went on by a lane that skirted the church and led through her father's orchard to his house. The door of the church was open and she could look in at the dim aisle and even catch a glimpse of the altar at the end with a lighted taper before it. She stopped to cross herself, then passing around the church she entered the orchard. Here the boughs of the apple and peach trees made a pattern of the sunshine on the grass. The shade was very welcome. She stopped, and leaning against one of the trees half closed her eyes.

Through her drooping lids she suddenly saw a circle of white light, whiter than sunlight, spread out on the grass between her and the church. The clear white circle widened. She opened her eyes and saw that the light was also in the air, that there was a column of it reaching up to the sky. She rubbed her eyes, thinking she must be dreaming, but the light stayed. Then slowly came into view a shining figure, appearing right out of the air but growing more and more plain until she could see it was an angel with a flaming sword, an angel clad in silver with a great halo of golden light about his head. She knew it was Saint Michael. She dropped to her knees and crossed herself many times. The angel stood silently before her, and now she saw other angels come slowly into the light and stand about Saint Michael. They all looked at her, but their lips did not move. The light was so bright now that she had to cover her eyes with her hands. She fell forward on her knees, trembling in great fear. When she dared to open her eyes again the wonderful vision had vanished, and there were only the trees and the stone wall of the church beyond.

It was some time later that Joan went into the house and joined her sister Catherine in the kitchen. She had the feeling of having been dreaming, but she was quite sure that her eyes had been wide open and that she had actually seen the miracle in the orchard. The thought of it kept her silent; she felt that she could not speak of it to other people; they would not believe her or would call her a witch. So she went about her work just as if nothing had happened, and she was kept very busy, because the family were poor peasants, and Joan was a strong, sturdy, capable girl who could do a score of useful things. Indoors she helped her mother with the spinning, the sewing, the cooking, and in keeping the small house clean; out-of-doors she worked in the fields with her brothers, gathered the harvest with the other girls of Domremy, and sometimes took her turn in watching the village cattle in the pasture lands down in the valley of the Meuse. She seemed to be quite like other girls of her age, very fond of bright dresses, always ready to dance or play, amused at a joke, but besides stronger and braver than most of the other girls, and always eager to help any one in trouble. When a child or an old woman was ill in the town it was Joan who was most apt to nurse them, to take them flowers or fruit; and when some poor wanderer begged James of Arc to shelter him over night it was Joan who would give the stranger her bed and sleep on a pile of rushes in her sister's room. Every one was fond of her, and though the other children sometimes teased her for being silent and for liking to go to church, she paid no heed to them, and was happy in her own way.

Near Domremy was a fortress called the Castle of the Island where the noble Lord of Boulemont and his family lived. The men of the village had to take turns in standing guard at the castle, but in return they could fly there for refuge in times of danger. A giant beech-tree stood near the place, and it was said that here one of the ancestors of the noble lord had met a fairy and often talked with her. On feast days the lord and his family made merry in the shade of this beech, and the village children often went there also, hung wreaths of flowers on the limbs of the fairy tree, danced about it, ate their bread and cheese and cakes under its shade, and drank the waters of a near-by fountain which were supposed to heal any one who was sick. Here the children picnicked one summer day not long after Joan had seen the vision of Saint Michael, and here Philippe brought Joan a half-dozen willow wands and cut them into pipes and whistles for her. The boys and girls ran races against each other, and Joan was so fleet-footed she could beat many of the boys, and after that they danced and then had supper and made a visit to the miraculous fountain to taste its water. By sundown they were tired and ready to go home. They all went together to the village and then scattered on their several ways. Joan, weary but happy, entered the little garden back of her father's house and sat down on a bench built against the wall. She gave a little sigh of content; the evening was beautiful and a warm wind blew across the valley from the west.

As she sat there resting she thought she caught the sound of voices. They did not come from the house, but seemed to be borne to her on the soft breeze. Much surprised she sat up straight. Then came into shape again before her eyes the faint but clear image of Saint Michael, only a little distance from her in the garden. His eyes seemed to rest fixedly on hers. He grew so distinct she could see the joints in his silver armor and that his lips moved. She slid from the bench to her knees and bent her head. Some power outside herself made her look up. Two figures stood with Saint Michael now, one on each side, and she knew they were Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret.

Again Joan heard the voice, but now she knew it was Saint Michael who was speaking to her. He told her the kingdom of France lay in his care, that the king of France and all his people were in danger, and that she must prepare herself to go to her king's aid, for it was through her that France was to be delivered. He bade her be not afraid but prepare herself for the great work she was to do, and told her that the two saints there with him would be near her always and would direct and strengthen her. He ceased speaking, and slowly the three figures faded into air, and she heard only the whisper of the west wind in the trees.

She rose from the grass and slowly went indoors. All that evening she moved about her home in a trance, feeling she had a great secret she could share with no one, yet one which she could never forget.

A night or two later the village priest came for a chat with James of Arc. The two men talked of the war, and of the French and English kings. Joan sat by the window listening. Finally she heard her father say, "These be bad days; what with a weak king and the greedy English we French folk are like so many cattle waiting for the slaughter."

"Jesu have pity on us!" said the priest. "There is a prophecy made long syne by some holy man that our France shall be ruined by a woman and then be safe restored by a maid from the borders of Lorraine. We know the woman, King Charles' mother, Madame Isabeau of Bavaria herself; but where is the maid? God grant she come soon!"

There seemed to be silence in the room, but Joan heard a voice speaking to her. "Thou art the maid," said the voice. "Thou wast born to save this land of France."

The summer passed and winter came to Lorraine. Outwardly Joan of Arc was like the other girls of Domremy. She helped her mother indoors and her father in the fields, she went to mass and confession and she learned as much as her friends did of the troubles of her country. But more and more often the voices spoke to her, when she was watching the cattle in the pasture, or visiting the little chapel on the hillside, or sewing in her room at home. They would come to her without warning, but always when she was alone, and they told her again and again that she was to save France, but they did not yet tell her how she was to do it. Sometimes she saw the visions of the saints themselves, but more often only heard their voices, and in time they grew so familiar to her that she no longer trembled at the sound.

In the summer when Joan was sixteen the English and the soldiers of Burgundy swept down on Lorraine, and the people of Domremy, peasant folk who were always at the mercy of the troopers, left their homes and drove their cattle seven miles southward to the walled town of Neufchâteau. Joan, now a tall strong girl, pretty with her black hair and eyes and sunburned cheeks, went with her family and found a home in the walled city with a woman named La Rousse. Here, safe within the walls, she helped the other girls in tending the animals and caring for the housework. She heard wild tales of the terrible things the enemy's soldiers were doing in the country, and she

prayed that her family and friends might not fall into their hands. Again Saint Michael appeared to her, and now he told her that the time was not far distant when she must set forth on her sacred mission.

The enemy's soldiers soon left that part of the country and James of Arc and his neighbors were able to return to Domremy. They found the village burned, the church a pile of ruins, only the stone walls of their houses standing, the crops destroyed, their goods carried away. They still had their cattle, and they set to work to build new roofs for their homes and go on with their work. For the first time the children saw what war meant. Joan found the orchard where she had seen her first vision laid waste, and beyond it the blackened stones of what had been the church. She understood that what had happened there was happening all over France and began to realize that God had called her to the wonderful work of saving her countrymen. The voices spoke again, and now they began to tell her exactly what it was that she must do.

Joan was now nearly seventeen, and Philippe, her old friend, was much in love with her and asked her to marry him. She was very fond of him, and liked him much better than she did any of the other youths of Domremy, but the voices told her that she must not marry, but must give all her thoughts to the great work which had been set her. Philippe entreated her to change her mind, but she would not. Little by little now she spoke to him and to her other friends of the messages Saint Michael and the other saints had sent her.

In the autumn of 1428 the fate of France seemed trembling in the balance, bound up with the fate of the city of Orleans. The English army had just laid siege to that city, and if Orleans fell France was lost. The sovereign of France, Charles VII, was a weakling, and in the eyes of many French people not really their king, but only the heir to the throne, or Dauphin as he was called, because he had not yet been crowned and consecrated as king at the old city of Rheims. Rheims was in the hands of the English, but it must be taken from them, and Charles the Dauphin must be crowned and anointed there if he was to be King of France. One autumn day in 1428 the voices spoke again to the peasant maid of Domremy and gave her two commands; first to save Orleans from the English, and second to lead the Dauphin to Rheims and have him crowned king there.

Naturally the tasks seemed impossible to Joan; she pleaded that she could not ride, knew nothing of war, and had never been out of the valley of the Meuse. The voices told her that she would be guided safely, and that first she must go to the village of Vaucouleurs and ask the captain, Robert of Baudricourt, for an escort to take her to the Dauphin. Moreover, she must not delay; she must save the city of Orleans.

Her chance to start came almost at once. A cousin of hers who lived near Vaucouleurs fell sick, and Joan offered to nurse her. At the cousin's house Joan told the husband that she was commanded to raise the siege of Orleans and asked him to take her to Robert of Baudricourt. The simple peasant was amazed and at first would not believe her, but she was so earnest and spoke so positively of the commands given her that finally he yielded and agreed to take her to the captain in Vaucouleurs.

A little later Joan and the peasant appeared before Robert of Baudricourt. The captain saw a common farmer and a strong, dark, pretty girl dressed in coarse red stuff like any ordinary peasant maid. Joan told him he must send her with an escort to the Dauphin. The captain laughed loudly and bade her go home and tend the cattle. She protested, but he only scoffed at her talk of her mission.

Joan, however, did not go home, but stayed in the town, and told those she met that she must go to the Dauphin because she was the maid who was to save France. She seemed an honest, gentle girl, and one by one people began to take an interest in her story and wonder if it could be true. One day a roystering soldier named John of Metz stopped at the house where she lived, and asked for her, thinking to make fun of her. "What are you doing here?" he demanded when she came to the door. "I have come," said Joan, "to a royal city to tell Robert of Baudricourt to send me to the Dauphin, but he cares not for me or for my words. Nevertheless, before mid-Lent, I must be with the Dauphin, though I have to wear my legs down to my knees. No one in the world, neither kings, nor dukes, nor king of Scotland's daughter, nor any one else can recover the kingdom of France without help from me, though I would rather spin by my mother's side, since this is not my calling. But I must go and do this work, for my Lord wishes me to do it." "Who is your Lord?" asked the soldier in surprise. "God," said Joan. The man was so much impressed by her words that he said he would take her to the Dauphin himself. He asked her when she wished to start. "Rather now than to-morrow, rather to-morrow than afterwards," Joan answered.

But even with the aid of this soldier and of the friends she had made who believed in her it was some time before Joan could persuade the captain to give her an escort. At last she told him of the visions and the voices and finally he let himself be persuaded. He gave her the men she wanted and she made ready to start on her journey to the Dauphin. She decided she had better dress as a young man, and her friends bought her the clothes she needed and a horse. She rode out of Vaucouleurs clad in the black vest and hose, and gray cloak of a squire, booted and spurred, with a sword at her side and her hair cut short and round, saucer fashion, as was the style. Six armed men went with her. She did not want to go, she longed to return to her mother and the simple folk of Domremy, but the voices kept saying over and over, "Go, Child of God, go forth to save France."

The Dauphin was at the castle of Chinon in Touraine. There Joan went, and begged him to listen to her. The news of the peasant girl who thought she was to rescue the land had already come to him and he was curious about her. He granted her an interview, but thinking to test her, hid himself among a group of courtiers. As she entered the room the voices told her which was Charles and she went straight to him. She dropped upon her knee before him. "Gentle Dauphin," she said, "I have come to you on a message from God, to bring help to you and to your kingdom." Then in answer to his questions, she told him how she had been directed to lead his army to the aid of Orleans.

The Dauphin was impressed, and bade her be cared for at the castle. Again she had to wait, but now the story of her visions and the prophecy that a peasant maid of Lorraine should save France had spread abroad and people began to

put their faith in her. The common people were the first to be convinced, because they were by nature superstitious and found no difficulty in believing the marvelous stories that now began to be told about Joan; after them the captains and the soldiers were willing at least to pretend to believe in her because she would lead them against their enemies; and finally Charles VII himself, weak and disappointed king as he was, decided that Joan could at least do his cause no harm, and might do it good, and so gave his consent to her requests.

In a very short time then the simple girl of Domremy, only seventeen years old, was put at the head of the French army and rode north to raise the siege of Orleans. Clad in full armor, astride a white charger, sword at her side, she carried a banner which had been described to her by the mystic voices. The field of the banner was sown with the lilies of France, in the centre was painted God holding the world and on each side knelt an angel. The motto was "Jesus Maria." With this banner floating above her she rode to Orleans, and all the country people who saw her pass told their neighbors the old prophecy had come true.

By great good fortune Joan's army was able to enter the city of Orleans. There the warrior-maid was received with the utmost reverence, greeted as a deliverer sent by God, and hope revived in the people's hearts. She waited a short time, and then taking counsel with her generals planned an attack on the English outside the walls. Again fortune stood by her, the French were victorious, and the enemy were forced to retreat and so raise the siege.

Joan's first task was done. After an interval she set out upon the second, to crown the Dauphin in the city of Rheims. This meant a march through a part of France held by the enemy and the capture of many cities. Joan and her army accomplished the work, however, and the day came when Charles the Dauphin and the Maid of Orleans, as she was now called, entered the great cathedral of Rheims, and Joan heard her prince consecrated and proclaimed King of France. She had given her country new hope and strength and a king to look to.

Joan had now completed the two tasks for which she had left Domremy; her voices had spoken truly to her and she had done what they had commanded. She wanted to go home, enter her father's house again, and remain a peasant girl like her friends and share their simple life. But she had become too wonderful in the eyes of France for the people to let her do as she wished. They begged her to do more, and so she was persuaded to keep with the royal army and wage battle after battle with the English. For a time victory stayed with her, but finally one day at Compiègne she was cut off from her men by the enemy, surrounded and taken prisoner. The rest of her history is briefly told. She was put in prison at Rouen, tried for witchcraft, condemned and burned at the stake in 1431, when she was nineteen years old.

So it was that the peasant girl stirred France to hope by her wonderful deeds, and gave her life at the end for her country's sake. France made her a national heroine, the Catholic Church proclaimed her a Saint, and in all history there is hardly to be found so marvelous a story as that of the simple girl of Domremy, Joan of Arc, called the Maid of France.

## III

### Vittoria Colonna

### The Girl of Ischia: 1490-1547

Vines had woven the walls of a little natural bower on a high cliff of the wooded, sea-swept island of Ischia off the coast of Italy. Beyond lay the bay of Naples, a deep blue glimmering with specks of gold, and still farther off stretched the white and brown and yellow roofs and walls of that sun-loved city. It was late afternoon, the hour of all the four and twenty when the city and the sea were most alluring to the eye. In the bower sat a woman and a golden-haired girl, and each was watching the colors shift and deepen in the broad breeze-touched bay.

"Is there anything else as lovely, Isabella?" asked the girl in time. "See yon handful of opals just tossed on the waves off Capua. How still it is! The woods have gone to sleep."

The woman smiled. "Peace to their slumbers. Yonder poor town of Naples has little time to rest! What with France and Spain, the Holy Father and the rest of them, the poor folk of Naples can scarce call their souls their own."

"Indeed 'tis like looking down from a nest upon a stormy plain," agreed the girl. "Here at least are few plottings and struggles."

She settled more comfortably, her head resting in the palm of her hand. Then, after a moment, she sat up again and, turning to her companion, laid a finger to her lips. Close to them, the other side of the network of wild vines, was the sound of footsteps and presently of voices.

"To the west, beyond this cliff, lies a beach," she heard a man's voice say, "where the Marquis Ferdinand and his teacher come to swim each day at this hour. We can hide in the bushes back of the shore and take them unarmed. The Orsini have offered an hundred ducats for the boy."

There followed a chuckle, and then another voice added: "'Tis an easy way to line my purse again."

"Softly then, softly," cautioned the first speaker, and crackling twigs marked their stealthy descent towards the sheltered beach.

The girl, alarm in her eyes, sat up straight. As soon as the crackling ceased she bent forward. "Didst hear, Isabella?" she whispered. "Didst hear yon plot? They wait for Ferdinand and Messer Florio to bathe beneath the cliff and then set on them. An hundred ducats the Orsini pay. What can we do to warn them?"

But Isabella's wits seemed flown away. She sat silent, rocking from side to side, her face suddenly quite white.

"Think, Isabella, think; what shall we do? We can't let them have Ferdinand without a warning. 'Tis almost time that his boat came alongshore. He bathes at sunset and the sun is nearly gone. Speak, Isabella, speak."

The girl put her hand on the woman's arm and shook her. The only reply was a moan and a whispered, "Oh, Vittoria, what will our dear lady the Duchess say?"

"She will say we were cowards for one thing, and she will be right," said the girl. "Many a time have I heard my father say, 'There's nothing the Orsini want but the Colonna will snatch away from them.' They shan't have Ferdinand. Tell your beads here on the cliff an you will; I'm going down over its edge to the beach."

She stood up, tall and slender in her white gown, her fair hair falling to her shoulders, and looked out across the bay. "There, he is coming now," she exclaimed, pointing eastward to where a white sail was skimming the sparkling waves. "If they take Ferdinand they take Vittoria Colonna too."

"But the Duchess——" began the frightened Isabella. "She bade me never leave thee. If I go home alone——"

"Stop!" ordered the girl. "Thou knowest the safety of Ferdinand is of more value than all the womenfolk in Ischia. The boat is almost here."

She stepped to the edge of the cliff where the vines were thickest and tested them with her feet. Then, searching carefully for that ladder of knotted branches which seemed to promise the securest hold she stepped over the edge and slid her feet from one rung of the vine-ladder to another while she clung to the roots with her hands. Far below the waves murmured against the rocks and lapped at the silver half-moon of the sandy beach.

Fortunately the cliff was shelving and in places a path was worn where boys had hunted for sea-birds' nests. Vittoria was strong and she kept her hold upon one vine until she had found another quite as safe. Slowly she crept downward, stopping now and again to look out for the sailboat which was steadily crossing towards the little beach. She figured that it would pass beneath her just as she should reach a certain jutting ledge of rock. The wind was rising and she had to hasten. She twisted her fingers tightly about a vine and loosed her footing. So she slipped down and stood, out of breath and with her hair and dress disheveled, on the ledge. Putting her hands to her mouth she sent a hailing cry across the water.

The man and boy on the skiff looked up and saw the white-clad figure of the girl above them on the ledge. "It's Vittoria!" cried the boy. "She has some message for us, Florio. Send the boat in beneath the cliff."

The man nodded and swung the tiller over so that the light cockle-shell skiff danced over the water to Vittoria's ledge. As they neared it the boy, a handsome, curly-haired, sunburned lad of fifteen, caught at the matting of heavy vines which hung almost to the water's edge while the man dropped the little sail.

"What is it, Vittoria?" asked the boy. "Messer Florio and I were going for our swim."

"Not to-day, Ferdinand," she answered. "I have word for thee. Wilt catch me if I climb down?"

"Aye, that I will."

Holding again by the vines and slipping her feet from rung to rung Vittoria left her ledge and was soon near enough for Ferdinand to catch her in his arms. Messer Florio steadied the boat against the rock while the boy swung Vittoria across the gunwale.

"Now set your sail back towards home," she commanded.

"Why, Vittoria?"

"Isabella and I were on the cliff but now," she exclaimed, her eyes sparkling, "when we heard two men plan how they should hide behind the trees of the beach and seize upon you both when you were unarmed. One said the Orsini would pay an hundred ducats for Ferdinand. They are down there waiting now."

Messer Florio's swart face paled and the boy frowned. "So even in Ischia there is danger from those wolves, is there?" said he. "Oh, wait until I am a man, and can draw their fangs for them."

"Aye, wait, Ferdinand. Meantime let us be sailing towards home."

"Truly, the Lady Vittoria speaks wisely," said Messer Florio, glancing up at the cliff as though fearful that their enemies might even yet be in position to harm them from above. "Take my place, Ferdinand, while I work the bow out to sea again."

The boy obeyed, and between them they soon had the skiff tacking out from shore, her nose pointing over towards Capua.

"Poor Isabella," said Vittoria after a time. "I think she was too fearful even to speak. We must send a guard to bring her in by dusk."

"'Tis well one of you had courage to give the warning," said Florio. "'Twas a climb few girls would care to risk to my thinking."

"Needs must when the devil drives," answered Vittoria with a laugh. "I could not see them steal my husband from before my very eyes. Moreover when have the Orsini ever had the better of a true Colonna?"

So Ferdinand the boy Marquis of Pescara and Florio his tutor sang the praises of the little Lady Vittoria Colonna until they had rounded the rugged cliffs of Ischia and sailed into safe harbor. Above the landing-place stood the great fortress-castle where lived Costanza d' Avalos, Duchess of Francavilla, and châtelaine of this island rock of Ischia. Florio gave a sigh of relief as he saw Ferdinand and Vittoria step on shore. He knew the robbers would have made short shrift of him if they could have placed their hands on the young Lord of Pescara.

In those days the great Roman families of Colonna and Orsini were always at swords' points. Each had had many cardinals, statesmen, and warriors, and each strove its hardest to despoil the other. Vittoria, the youngest daughter of Fabrizio Colonna, had been born in 1490 in the Castle of Marino, which guarded one of the passes in the Alban hills near Rome. But such a castle was no place for children, for the lords of Marino and the other mountain strongholds lived like robber barons, swooping down on neighboring towns and cities, holding travelers to ransom, and attacking and destroying one another's homes on any favoring chance. The Lord Fabrizio Colonna and his wife Agnes were anxious to place their daughter in safer hands, and at the same time it happened that Ferdinand II, King of Sicily and Naples, was desirous of uniting the powerful Colonna family to his cause by marrying a girl of that house to a boy of his own race. So at five years of age Vittoria was solemnly betrothed to Ferdinand, Marquis of Pescara, and went to live in the sheltered island of Ischia in the Bay of Naples, under the care of the Duchess of Francavilla, the older sister of the young Marquis Ferdinand. Here the boy and girl were brought up together, studying under the same teachers, playing the same games, while the careful Duchess kept vigilant watch and ward over both, for nothing would have pleased the lords of the house of Orsini better than to prevent the marriage of a Colonna to a boy of such rank and wealth. Even in Ischia, protected by nature as it was and guarded by the Duchess' soldiers, spies sometimes appeared, and neither Vittoria nor Ferdinand were strangers to perils at the hands of enemies of their houses.

For the most part, however, Ischia was quiet and the boy and girl led happy, peaceful lives. Ferdinand was trained to be a soldier, but also learned something of letters and art. A taste for poetry was considered fashionable among young noblemen of that period and he was brought up in the fashion. Vittoria showed an unusual love of literature, and the Duchess, finding her young ward eager to learn, trained her in Latin and Greek and urged her to write verses of her own.

Ferdinand grew tall and strong, fit for the work of a soldier, gentle at most times, but fiery when his anger was aroused. He was considered remarkably handsome, with an auburn beard, an aquiline nose, and eyes keen and commanding. Vittoria, while she was still a girl, was regarded as one of the beauties of Italy, her face being of the calm oval Roman type, with the broad brow, the thoughtful eyes, and the full red lips. Poets sang the praises of her golden hair and artists loved to paint it, and the fame of its beauty had spread to Rome and Naples through the

words of wandering troubadours who had been to Ischia.

When Vittoria Colonna and Ferdinand d'Avalos were nineteen years old they were married, and it was a true love-match, for they had grown more and more fond of each other during the years they had spent on the island. The wedding was almost royal in its magnificence, and then bride and groom went to Naples, where endless feasts were given in their honor. They traveled a little and then went back to Ischia, where for three years Ferdinand and Vittoria were very happy, and where she began to write some of those sonnets which were to win her fame.

Then came the call to war, and Ferdinand left Vittoria at Ischia to hasten to the aid of his king who was warring with Louis XII of France.

From that time the life of Vittoria's husband was spent in camps and battles. He was unusually brave, a man beloved by his soldiers, and as a general there were few men of the age his equal. Now he was winning, now losing, at one time in prison at Milan writing letters in poetry to his wife to which she replied with poems of her own. He was wounded at the great battle of Pavia, and a little later, worn out by his hard warring life, died in 1525.

Vittoria stayed at Ischia, and to ease her grief for her loved husband wrote many sonnets dealing with their life together. Her poems were considered very beautiful and her fame grew until she was accounted among the greatest of Italian writers. After a time she traveled and everywhere she was received with the highest honors as a poetess. At last she settled in Rome, and there her house was the centre of learning in the city. All men of talent claimed to be her friends, and the letters of the day were filled with accounts of her genius, her holiness, and her beauty. Chief among her friends was the great painter Michael Angelo, and the friendship of each was a continual inspiration to the genius of the other.

So it was that this girl who saved her betrothed husband from his enemies that day at Ischia became in time one of the noblest figures in Italian life, one of the finest flowers of what we call the Renaissance in Europe.

## IV

### Catherine de' Medici

### The Girl of Mediæval Italy: 1519-1589

A stone bench with arms carved to represent crouching lions stood under an ilex tree in a corner of the Medici gardens in Florence. There, on a certain autumn afternoon, sat two girls, talking languidly, for the day was hot. Both were dark, but one looked much like a hundred other girls to be met in the streets of Florence, the other was striking. Her long, oval face was very pale, and seemed the more colorless in contrast with the black hair which she wore low on her forehead and over the tips of her ears. Her lips were thin and straight, and her eyelids made her eyes look long and narrow, almost like two slits from which gleamed a singularly bright or a dull light, depending on whether she were interested or indifferent. Delicate black brows were penciled above those eyes. She was handsome, but one might also judge that she was crafty.

Just now she was admiring the glitter of a ruby in a ring upon her hand. "How much it looks like a drop of blood," she was saying. "Hast thou ever seen one of those rings, Bianca, with a little hidden place to carry poison? My uncle Filippo has one. The Duke's goldsmith made it for him."

"I hate all such things," said Bianca. "If I had such a ring I'd throw it into the Arno."

"Nevertheless they are useful sometimes. My uncle and the Duke are playing at being friends now, but thou knowest that to-morrow they might well be at each other's throats." She smoothed a fold of the green gown on her knee. "I like my uncle, but the Duke——" she shrugged her shoulders. "I trust him no more than I would the rabble of Florence. He is kind to me now. In good faith I know there is some reason for it. 'Tis not love of me or because I am a girl of his house of the Medici."

"Softly," warned Bianca. "Here is he now coming through the garden."

There came towards them a singular group. One was a tall man, dressed in doublet and hose, with a long heavy gold chain hanging almost to his waist, and a gold girdle in which was stuck a short dagger, the handle of which glittered with precious stones. A velvet cape hung from his shoulders, and on his head perched a flat velvet cap, tilted at an angle. He bore a certain resemblance to the girl in green; he had the same cream-white skin, lustrous black hair, and narrow, searching eyes. Beside him came a dwarf, dressed in parti-colored brown and gold. He had to take two little hopping steps to every long stride of the man with him. On the other side of the Duke stalked a big greyhound, a certain stately grace in every movement. He stood so high that the Duke could pat his head and pull his long ears without stooping.

The girls rose and courtesied as the others reached them. The Duke, with a smile in his black eyes, waved his hand for them to be seated. "'Tis pleasant here in thy little nook, Catherine," said he. "This work over state affairs in my cabinet makes my head buzz as if 'twere a hive of angry bees."

"What honeyed thoughts must be yours, my lord," observed the dwarf.

"Honeyed indeed, since they were of my fair Catherine," answered his master. "Lie down in the shade, good lad, and rest thy overworked wits. I would have a talk with my dear niece if she will give me room upon her bench."

Catherine moved, and the Duke sat down. Bianca rose, but the Duke bade her stay. "I have no secrets from Catherine's friends," said he.

"Thou knowest well, little lady," he began, "that we of the Medici have had our ups and downs. Young as thou art thou hast not escaped them. Recall those days when thou wert at the convent, and we were striving to retake Florence from the barbarous chiefs of the Republic. Did not Battista Cei—wretched man! propose that thou shouldst be set out between two battlements where the artillery fire would sweep across thee?"

"I remember well," said Catherine, her eyes gleaming as she spoke.

"And later, did not Castiglione advise that rather than hand thee over to the care of our Holy Father the Pope thou shouldst be given to the soft mercy of the mercenary soldiers?"

"That I remember also," said Catherine. "Though I was only nine I shall never forget those days."

"I only recall them," continued the Duke, "that thou mayst consider how uncertain is the life of a Medici, and may understand with what care I have looked to thy welfare. Thou art dear to me as my own daughter, and as a daughter have I planned for thee. Now for my news. I have arranged to marry thee to a son of the French King!"

He looked for some surprise on Catherine's part, but she showed none. She gazed straight ahead of her, her eyelids drooping a little over her eyes.

"The French King has two sons, the Dauphin and Prince Henry. Which am I to marry?" she asked quietly.

The Duke crossed one knee upon the other. "I cannot tell thee yet," he answered. "The Dauphin for preference, but Henry if need be. The King has raised objections to the first, but a house like ours, which has given two Popes to

Christendom, might well provide a Queen for the throne of France. One or the other it will be."

Catherine bent her head. "I trust thou hast always found me dutiful," said she, "and wilt in this."

The Duke, his white fingers playing with the chain about his neck, eyed the girl closely. "Thou art a curious maiden, Catherine," he observed slowly. "I tell thee that thou art to marry a Valois and go to Paris and thou showest as much excitement as if I said the wind had veered a quarter. Is it nothing to thee to marry and leave thy home?"

Catherine smiled, her eyes bent on the greyhound which lay crouched at her feet. "Good my lord," she answered, "I have known ever since I was old enough to think of such things that some day thou or some other of my kinsmen would come to me and say, 'Catherine, thou art to marry such and such a prince.' To me they are all alike, dressed of a piece. I know not even if they be comely or no, but only that such a one is Heir of France and such is Prince of Savoy. I am ready to live in Paris or in Milan as it suits my kinsmen. As for leaving home thou hast said thyself that my days here have been somewhat hazardous. I have no reason to love these Florentine gentlemen overmuch."

"True," agreed the Duke. "Thou sayest wisely, surprising wisely for a maid thy years. If I mistake not thou wilt play this game of statecraft shrewdly, with an eye ever to the stakes and little concern for the other players. It is well, the Medici have never played the fool. One word more. Shortly thou and I and thy good uncle Filippo Strozzi must leave for Leghorn, there to meet the Pope and the envoys of the King of France, and sign the marriage papers. I am right glad that Filippo will go. He will safeguard thee as carefully as I. Now must I take my leave. May thy dreams be sweet, savored with the thought that some day thou mayst be Queen in France." He rose and poked the dwarf with his toe. "Come, good jester, much sleep maketh the wits dull."

"Then should mine be sharp," answered the dwarf, springing up. "He who serves the Medici sleeps with one eye open."

"And so he must," agreed the Duke with a laugh. He called to the dog and the three went back across the lawn as they had come.

Only when they were out of sight did Catherine speak. "He is a smooth-tongued man in very truth, Bianca," said she. "He talks about the care he takes of me, the thought he spends in planning for my marriage. He would sell me to-morrow to the highest bidder. If I marry one of the French princes 'tis so that he may count on France's aid to help him here in Italy. And he is glad that Uncle Filippo will go to Leghorn with me. He's glad forsooth because my uncle is the most popular man in Florence, and could upset the Duke in a twinkling had he the mind to do so. His head will rest the easier with me in Paris and the Strozzi out of Florence. Oh, a very gentle kinsman is my lord Duke."

"Thou mayst not do him justice, Catherine," urged Bianca.

"Justice?" Catherine's eyes narrowed and a gleam shot into them. "I may be young, Bianca, but I am no fool. I cannot speak for other countries, but here in Italy one should trust no one else. Each has some plan in mind, and given the chance will stop at nothing to have his way with things. Hark you now." The girl lowered her voice to a whisper. "Thou knowest Messer Lorenzino de' Medici, Duke Alessandro's closest friend and counselor? Were I the Duke, Lorenzino would leave Florence for his health and never return. Twice have I come upon him when he thought he was alone and each time there was a dark brooding look upon his face. He has some purpose in his friendliness. What if some evening when the Duke walks forth alone, let us say strolls on the other side this ilex where the poplars are a screen, a man glides from the shadow? A glint of steel, and Duke Alessandro is no more. The Florentines are glad, and Lorenzino reaps rewards. He has done a public service. 'Tis so easy, so very easy."

"Be still, Catherine. What thoughts thou hast! 'Tis enough to make one shudder."

The gleam in Catherine's eyes disappeared, and she was the same quiet indifferent girl she had been before. "I only said how easy. I only thought the Duke should be more careful of his friends."

"But even to think such things is dangerous, Catherine," protested the nervous Bianca.

"No, thoughts have killed no one," answered Catherine, with a shrewd smile. "Else there had been no one left alive by now."

"I will not talk with thee when thou art so cruel-minded, Catherine," and Bianca rose from the stone seat.

"'Tis not I. 'Tis the great world about me, the men and women of all the Christian courts. Howbeit 'tis time we went indoors. I must plan preparation for this journey to Leghorn the Duke told me of."

She rose also, and moved across the lawn by the side of her friend with a sinuous grace which was remarkable in a girl so young as she. However, as those in the Medici Palace often observed, the Lady Catherine, styled the Princess of Florence, was old for her age in more ways than one.

CATHERINE DE' MEDICI
*From an old engraving*

Probably this was to have been expected. Catherine had lost her father and mother very shortly after she was born. Her father was Lorenzo de' Medici, and her mother Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne before her marriage. Her father had been the head of his family in Florence and the real ruler there, although the Florentines were so jealous of what they considered their independence that he had never dared proclaim himself lord of the city and used the title of Duke of Urbino. Even so after Lorenzo's death the Medici had been driven from Florence and had had to fight desperately to retake it. At that time the leaders of the republic in the city had shut Catherine, who was only nine years old, in a convent, and had discussed the best way in which to be rid of her, as the Duke had so thoughtfully reminded her. When the Medici finally took possession of the city again Alessandro was the head of the family and became Tyrant of Florence, calling himself Duke of the City of Penna. He released Catherine from the convent and adopted her into his own family, giving her the title of Princess of Florence. Catherine, although she was only fourteen, had seen enough of the men of her family to distrust them almost as much as she did the people of the city. On all sides she had found treachery and deceit and greed for power, and if she was overwise for her years in such matters, it was because she had been brought up to see little else.

One man alone she trusted, her uncle Filippo Strozzi, who had married her father's sister, and who was now the most popular man in Florence. The Duke would have liked to be rid of this man by any means he could, but he did not dare deal with him in an underhand way, and so decided to send him to accompany Catherine to Leghorn, hoping that he might be induced later to go with his niece to France and keep away from Florence. Catherine had judged rightly when she said the Duke had laid his plans for her marriage more for his own protection than for her welfare.

Early in October, 1533, the Duke Alessandro, Filippo Strozzi, and Catherine left Florence for Leghorn. In order to dazzle the French court the Duke had arranged a remarkable suite to accompany the young Princess. The entire procession consisted of more than a thousand persons, and when the rear-guard were still leaving the gate of Florence those in the lead had already passed the first village outside the city.

Although Duke Alessandro was head of the house of Medici in Florence the Pope, Clement VII, was head of that house in Italy, and he had decided that he also would go to Leghorn and take a hand in the wedding plans of the Lady Catherine. Like all the powerful princes of that day both Pope Clement and Duke Alessandro wished to dazzle the rest of the world with their magnificence, and Catherine must have been surprised at the sights she saw in Leghorn. The Pope had arrived by sea, and his private galley was hung with crimson satin trimmed with golden fringe, and covered with an awning of cloth of gold. This same barge had been fitted with a suite of rooms for Catherine herself, and here were gathered priceless works of art and scores of curious treasures which had been sent to the Pope from distant countries. The oarsmen and the sailors were all magnificently dressed, and three more barges were filled with the officers and servants of His Holiness. Near the Papal galleys were moored the barges of the envoys of the French King, headed by the Duke of Albany, and so the harbor was filled with splendid vessels, while on shore Duke Alessandro did his best to amaze the simple people of Leghorn with the wealth and magnificence of the Lords of Florence.

There followed many meetings between the Pope and the Duke and the French envoys. It was settled that Catherine's marriage dowry should amount to a hundred thousand ducats, a very large sum of money for even such a rich house as that of the Medici to pay. Then the question arose as to which of the French princes she was to marry, whether the Dauphin or Henry, Duke of Orleans. The Pope and the Duke urged that she be married to the Dauphin, but the French King would not consent, and finally the two Medici princes realized that they had better take the younger son while they could get him, and agreed that Catherine should marry Henry. But by this time they were so

much afraid that the French King Francis I would try to break his agreement with them that they insisted on an immediate wedding for Catherine and journeyed on to the city of Marseilles in order that it might take place at once.

If the Pope and the Duke were fond of gorgeous display, Francis I was even more so. Although he had given many splendid entertainments before, he outdid himself on this occasion. The wedding feasts for Henry and Catherine lasted thirty-four days, and during all that time the Pope and the King witnessed tournaments and sham sea-battles, listened to music and to the poems of the troubadours, and met at the banquet-table to eat and drink and make merry half the night. So Catherine, just fifteen years old, was married to Henry, who was three weeks older.

Catherine's opinion of the treachery and deceit of the people of her time was quite correct. She had told Bianca only what was the truth, for in mediæval Italy every one in high place was a conspirator and the men of her own family were the worst. The Pope and the Duke had wanted to marry Catherine to the Dauphin so that she might some day be Queen of France. They found they could not do this, and must take the second son. History does not tell what plots were hatched on that golden barge off Leghorn, but history does state that only a very short time after the wedding the Dauphin died, and that it was generally believed that he had been poisoned. He had been taking part in some athletic games at Tournon on a hot day in August, and when he stopped, being very warm, he asked for a glass of water. It was given to him iced, and a short time later he died. The man who gave him the glass had been one of those who were with Duke Alessandro at Leghorn. Thus, whether by their own devices or by chance, the heads of the house of Medici saw their little Lady Catherine the wife of the heir to the French throne.

Catherine was shrewd, and she studied the people about her in France with the same skill that she had shown in Florence. She saw that she must win the affection of the king if she were to escape suspicion of taking part in the many plots that were made against him. So she stayed close beside him whenever she could, and was always ready to do whatever he might suggest, until very shortly Francis found himself exceedingly fond of this quiet, willing little daughter-in-law who seemed to admire him so much. She studied Henry and found him vain and pleasure-loving above everything else, and so she let him go his own way, interfering with nothing that he wished to do, but waiting until she might have the chance to win some power over him. And she studied the courtiers, men and women, so that she might be able to play them like pawns at chess, one against another, when the day should come on which she should be Queen of France.

As she waited she saw cunning and deceit win one victory after another in Italy and France. She heard how the brooding Lorenzino de' Medici, even as she had predicted to Bianca, had become Duke Alessandro's closest friend and greatest flatterer in order to find the chance to strike and kill him, and she heard how the people of Florence had proclaimed Lorenzino a patriot for ridding them of the Duke, and how her uncle Filippo Strozzi, one of the noblest men of the time, had vowed that he admired the assassin so much that each of his sons should marry one of Lorenzino's daughters.

Catherine became a most powerful woman, but powerful through fear. She had learned the lesson of her childhood well. She was a Medici, and therefore overweeningly ambitious, and she was as scheming, as clever, and as cruel as any of her famous family. Her husband, Henry, became King of France, and was killed in a tournament. Her three sons became kings of France in turn, and during all their reigns she was the power behind the throne. During all her life the court of France was a cobweb of intrigue, in which no one was safe, and a man or woman became powerful only to be secretly put out of the way lest he or she should grow too strong. She was beyond doubt one of the ablest women in French history and she might have done much to make France great and respected, but instead she almost ruined it by her selfish ambitions. History lays at Catherine's door the killing of innocent Huguenots in all parts of France, known as the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Eve. With all her gifts she could not rise above the teachings of her girlhood in Italy, and so she stands out as a queen of treachery and bloodshed, thoroughly typical of her age in its darker sides.

## V

### Lady Jane Grey

### The Girl of Tudor England: 1537-1554

A little lady sat reading a small, vellum-bound book in the window-seat of one of the rooms of his Majesty's palace of Westminster. She was short and slender, and for a girl of fourteen very graceful. Her face was fair and now warm-flushed by the sun, her hair was a soft red-brown and her eyes that light shade of hazel, almost red, which so often goes with hair of reddish color. Her dress was of green velvet, with great gold-embroidered sleeves. At her waist was a girdle of gold. Her gown was cut to a point at the neck and about her throat was a little chain and a small heart-shaped locket. On her head was a coif of fine white lace bound with tiny bands of green and gold. The window behind her was open, and now and then the breeze blew wisps of hair about her forehead and sometimes threatened to turn the leaves of her book.

Presently a boy, a few years older than the girl, dressed in dark red doublet and hose, with a flat cap of the same color on his head, pushed aside the arras at the door and came into the room. He was very pale, and his big eyes, under high black arching eyebrows, looked very tired and moody. He had crossed to the window-seat before the girl knew he was in the room.

She rose quickly and made a low courtesy. The boy rested one knee upon the window-seat. "I'm glad you've come to court, Lady Jane. I wish you might stay some time."

"Your Majesty is very good to say so."

The boy bit his lip. "All day and half the night people are saying to me, 'Your Majesty is very good' to do this or that, usually something they've made me do. Can't we forget, cousin, for just a little time, that I'm Edward the Sixth, King of England and Ireland and so on, and just pretend I'm simple Edward Tudor and you Jane Grey?"

"An your Majesty wishes it," she said, smiling at the dark-eyed boy.

"I do." The boy sat down on the window-seat. "Oh, Jane, it's a stupid life I lead. Always my masters with lessons, my bearded counselors with scrolls and ink-horns. When I'm tired one man gives me physic, when I'm well again another sets me tasks. My head splits with sermons, and acts of state, and such like matters. I think they grudge me the hours I have to sleep. And among them all I've only one true friend, Barnaby Fitzpatrick, and him they let me see but now and then."

"I know," said the Lady Jane. "It seems there are so many things we must learn. At home my master, Messer Aylmer, is forever setting me this or that to study."

Lady Jane Grey and Roger Ascham

The boy leaned forward and whispered, "I wish I were a boy of the streets, with a penny in my pocket and naught to

do but plan the spending of it."

"Oh, my lord—Edward, I mean," said the girl, much amazed.

The arras was pulled back again, and two youths entered. One was tall and fair, the other of much shorter stature, with merry black eyes. Both were dressed in the height of the court fashion, with plumed hats, short swords, and jeweled collars.

"Here's Barnaby," said the king, "and Lord Guildford Dudley. Oh, Barnaby, I'm free for an hour or so. What shall I do with it?"

The shorter of the two boys, drawing his heels together, made a low bow to the girl who had resumed her place on the window-seat. "My Lady Jane Grey," said he. "Welcome to our palace of Westminster. Is it not a cheerful place? But for the four of us here gathered I doubt if there be a soul within its walls under five and fifty years of age."

"My Lady Jane," said tall Guildford Dudley, making his bow in turn, "is kind to come here to relieve our dulness."

Now Edward clapped his hands impatiently. "Think, Barnaby, think. What shall we do?"

Barnaby looked out through the mullioned window. "Down there in the garden are bows and arrows. Suppose we be Robin Hood and his men and shoot at wands?"

"Good!" cried Edward. "They told me not to go out-of-doors while the sun was hot, nor walk in the garden without one of my gentlemen-at-arms. Now will I do both. Come, Jane, you shall judge among us for our skill. There's a little staircase just beyond the arras that leads into the garden."

He sprang up, his pale face flushed with the spirit of adventure, and throwing his arm over Barnaby's shoulder ran with him to the stairs.

Guildford Dudley smiled. "What say you, Lady Jane? Will you leave your book? 'Tis the royal order, you know."

"Very gladly, my lord. I was desiring something better to do." They followed the others to the staircase, and a moment later found themselves in the sunny garden.

From a flower bed Barnaby produced a rounded stick, some three feet long, and stuck it in the ground at thirty paces from a seat under a plane-tree. "Jane shall sit here and be our judge," said he, "while we three shoot at yonder wand."

The three boys chose their bows, which were quite as long as they were tall, and carefully fitted arrows to the cords. Then, standing under the tree, Edward took aim and loosed his bowstring. The arrow went very wild, clipping leaves from a yew some distance to the right.

Barnaby shot next and came nearer the wand. "My eye needs training," said he. "'Tis not near true yet."

Lord Guildford aimed carefully, and sent his shaft just over the wand's top. "Best of the three!" cried Barnaby, and the Lady Jane clapped her hands and smiled at the tall, fair-haired boy.

The second round was not very different. Edward, his arm shaking as he tried to hold the taut bow straight, shot his arrow into the ground. Barnaby missed the wand by an inch or two to the right, and Guildford grazed it, shooting very close.

Edward's third try was little better than his other two. His shaft went high and wide. He dropped his bow and threw himself on the ground at Jane's feet. "I can't do it," he complained. "'Tis idle trying. They never let me train my hand at sports."

But the other boys were adepts. Barnaby sent his third arrow right to the base of the wand so that the stick bent back, and then Guildford, taking the greatest care, let fly a shaft that hit the stick fairly and split it in two. "Well shot!" cried Barnaby. Guildford turned about, a smile on his pleasant face. "How was that, Lady Jane?"

"Splendid!" answered the girl. "If I had a prize I'd give it to you," and she made room for him to sit beside her on the bench.

Edward, his chin resting in his hand, was looking towards a gate at the rear of the garden. "I wish," he said slowly, "that we could go out into that lane and see what is happening there, just as other children do."

"Why not?" exclaimed Barnaby. "Who's to say no? Let's have a peep outside. Nobody'll be the wiser."

Edward got to his feet doubtfully, but when he saw the other three quite in earnest he laughed, and ran ahead of them to the gate. He swung it wide open and the four trooped out into the lane.

The walls of the palace grounds ran for some distance, but as soon as the children had turned a corner they came into a street of shops and small dwelling-houses where there were many people. They walked slowly, pointing things out to one another and looking curiously at the new sights about them. Finally Lady Jane spied a pedler standing in the road, with a basket at his waist hung by a rope about his neck. He was calling out in a loud voice to attract attention to his wares. "Let's see what he has," she exclaimed, running over towards him.

A number of people, attracted by the pedler's words, had already gathered near him, but the girl and the three boys stopped directly in front of him. He was a jolly-looking fellow, with a very red face, and a broad-brimmed hat, wound with an orange scarf, stuck far back on his head. "Come buy, come buy!" he called in a singsong voice. "Here are

little mirrors for the ladies, fresh from the court of Paris, wherein each may see how beautiful she is and how well her kerchief suits her. And here be ribbands will set the lads' hearts aflutter, and pieces of lace made after the fashion of Mechlin. Come buy, come buy! Come, my good dame, your man will be glad to see you look so fine when he comes home." But the woman he looked at laughed and shook her head. "He keeps his eyes for the food that's awaiting him," said she.

"What ho!" cried the pedler, thrusting his hand into the pile of small articles that lay heaped in his basket. "Talking of food, here be knives, each in a leather jacket of finest Spanish make, will carve you a venison haunch or a foeman's gizzard, just as your fancy sits. Here, my fine gentlemen," said he, extending a couple of the knives towards Edward, Barnaby, and Guildford, "you should have such to cut your way into court."

"I've a knife here," said Barnaby, touching the scabbard of his short sword, "worth twenty of those bodkins."

"Hark to him!" cried the pedler. "Bodkins indeed! Why, 'twas only yestereve his Majesty ordered a dozen of them to arm his Yeomen of the Guard!" He looked at Lady Jane, noting the richness of her dress. "What will my lady have? She has taste, I warrant. A sweet dye for the hair, a ring, a love philtre, a girdle set with gems?" As he spoke he held up one thing after another, tempting the four to draw near him.

Lady Jane looked into the basket and spied in a corner a bracelet hung with curiously cut bangles. "I like that," said she, pointing it out to the others.

"Ah!" cried the pedler. "The lady has good taste! 'Tis a sweet bracelet, captured from the Moors when the great city of Granada fell. Each of these bangles has a prayer writ upon it, and 'tis said that worn upon the left arm, just above the wrist, 'twill bring good luck beyond all wishing for."

"Take it as my gift, Lady Jane," said Edward, stretching out his hand for it.

"And the price," continued the pedler, "is most monstrous low, too low in fact by half, and yet 'tis the price. A mere matter of five florins."

Edward put his hand to his belt. He had no purse with him. "'Tis a fair price," said he. "I'll have the money sent you," and again he held out his hand.

"Sent me? Oh, no, fine sir. This hour I may be here, the next in Cheapside. Who buys of me pays in hand." He looked at the other two boys smilingly. "Such a small sum, only five florins."

But as it chanced they also had no purses with them. "Never mind, Edward," said Barnaby. "Lady Jane can have a finer one another day."

"No," said Edward, frowning, "she shall have it now." He looked at the pedler. "Give me the bracelet and in twenty minutes a man shall fetch you the money. Be at the palace gate. I'll send it to you."

The pedler shook his head. "An old bird must be wary, young sir. I might wait and wait and winter come and go, but no five florins. That is my rule to all, be ye whoever ye may."

Edward, however, had the Tudor hate of all opposition. "Give me the bracelet!" he exclaimed, stamping his foot on the paving. "And trust my word for pay, or I'll see you soundly thrashed and driven out of London!"

"Oh ho!" cried the pedler. "Sits the wind so? 'Twill need a bigger man than you to do one or t'other."

"Bigger than I!" cried the boy, his face like a sudden thunder-storm. "Why, you rascal you, I'm——" But before he could speak the word Barnaby had twitched his sleeve, and whispered, "Ssh—look about you."

Edward turned around. A few paces behind him a tall man, clad all in black, with long black moustaches and eyes that blazed with anger, had come to a stand. Now he turned to a man with a halberd who stood at his heel. "Drive that rogue away, and scatter the crowd!" he ordered. In a trice pedler and bystanders were on the wing.

The man in black stepped up to the four children. "So your Majesty would roam the streets at will?" said he. "And did your Majesty deign to consider what would happen to this country had one of these scamps taken you at your word and fallen foul of you?"

"I wanted a little holiday, good my lord," pleaded the boy. "'Twas only for an hour."

"And one such hour might have changed the history of England," said the other, who was John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, the most powerful man in the land and guardian of the King. He looked at the others. "And what a shame to draw the Lady Jane Grey into the streets! I should have thought you at least had known better, Guildford."

The fair-haired youth flinched before his father's frown. "'Twas only for a glimpse outside the gardens, your Grace," said he.

"Enough!" commanded the Duke sternly. "We will return to Westminster now. I would ask your Majesty to be so good as to walk with me."

Whereupon he offered his arm to the boy king, and led the little procession back to the gate of the garden by as short a way as he could. But even so word had got about that the boy who was bargaining with the pedler was none other than King Edward, and that the long-bearded man was the Duke of Northumberland. Therefore every one stared from the safe vantage of windows and doors, but was careful to keep out of the way, for the Duke was known to be a man of sudden and bitter wrath.

The garden-gate closed behind the five of them, and the hour of freedom was ended. Edward, looking more like a prisoner than a monarch, was led off to the small room called his cabinet to sign papers and listen to long reports. One of her mother's maids came in search of the Lady Jane, and carried her away to the apartments of the Duchess of Suffolk, where the girl was lectured by her mother the Duchess, and then set to studying a book of sermons.

It was not a happy time for royal children. The boy king, Edward VI, was kept penned in his palace of Westminster and ruled with a rod of iron by the stern Duke; his two half-sisters, the Princess Mary and the Princess Elizabeth, were both kept well guarded in the country and rarely allowed to see their friends; and his cousin, the Lady Jane Grey, who was next in line of succession to the throne, was hardly freer than these other royal children. They were all really only pawns in a great game of chess that was being played by the great noblemen of England, and no one seemed to care in the least whether they were happy or not.

The Lady Jane did not stay long at Westminster Palace. A few days after her outing with the three boys her father and mother took her back with them to their country home. Such a trip was made slowly and with much ceremony. The Duchess, her daughter, and their ladies-in-waiting rode in great lumbering coaches, or chariots, while the Duke and his gentlemen, who often numbered as many as a hundred, rode as a guard of honor. If the weather was fine the journey was pleasant, the cavalcade stopping at noon to picnic under the trees by the road, and arriving at night at some quaint inn, to be welcomed by a cheery host and hostess, leaping wood-fires, glistening pewter, and the fragrance of a great variety of roasted meats. But when the weather was bad and the wheels of the chariots sunk so deep in the mire that the horses could hardly pull them out again, and the snow fell or the wind whistled about the mounted cavaliers, then travel through "merry England" was not so happy an affair, and men and women were glad enough to reach their homes.

The Lady Jane had been trained to absolute obedience by a mother who seemed made of iron. She was forced to study in her own room on days when the rest of the household were out-of-doors hunting or hawking, and was set tasks translating from the Latin or Greek instead of playing in the garden. Once the famous scholar Roger Ascham came to the Duke of Suffolk's home at Bradgate Hall. He met the Duke and his wife with all their friends riding through the park on the way to the hunt. He asked where he would find the Lady Jane, and was told she was in her closet reading. He went into the house and found her seated at a window studying one of the works of the Greek writer Plato. Much surprised Ascham asked her why she gave up the sport of hunting for the sake of study.

The Lady Jane smiled, and answered quite seriously, "I think all their sport in the park is but a shadow to that pleasure I find in Plato. Alas! good folk, they never felt what true pleasure means."

Just two years after Lady Jane had watched the three boys shooting arrows at Westminster she was married to one of them, the tall Guildford Dudley. He was the son of the great Duke of Northumberland, who was already planning to put his son and his son's wife on the English throne after the death of the delicate Edward VI. The wedding was very magnificent, and every one predicted that the little lady and her nineteen-year old husband would be very happy.

Edward, the boy king, died barely six weeks later, when he had not quite reached his sixteenth birthday. Then great events happened to Lady Jane. The Duke of Northumberland and many other lords and ladies went to the house where she was staying and told her that the King had disinherited both his sister the Princess Mary and his sister the Princess Elizabeth, and had ordered that Jane Grey should succeed to the crown.

Then her own father and mother and, after them, all the lords and ladies knelt before her and kissed her hand and called her Queen Jane. She was too surprised at first to make any reply, but a little later she told them all she did not wish to be Queen. They answered that it was not a matter of her choice, but was her destiny. Reserved and obedient as ever, the girl bent her head and allowed her parents to proclaim her Queen.

On July 10, 1553, Lady Jane went from Richmond to the Palace of Westminster in London, where she was dressed in the great robes of state. Then she proceeded by barge down the river Thames to the Tower of London, which was then both a palace and a prison. As she landed and entered the Tower grounds the people hailed her as Queen. Her gown was of green and gold and covered with jewels, and her young husband walked beside her under a canopy, dazzlingly arrayed in a court suit of white and gold.

This quiet little Princess only reigned as Queen of England for nine days. Most of the country rose in arms on behalf of Mary Tudor, Edward VI's oldest sister, and the Duke of Northumberland's army was soon defeated and he was taken prisoner. Jane had no wish to be Queen; she, like the others, thought that Mary was the one entitled to rule. When her father came to her on July nineteenth and told her that her friends had been beaten and that she was no longer the Queen she was really glad. She had been sitting alone in her chair of state in the council chamber when he came to her. He looked at her, deserted by all her court, and his eyes filled with tears. "Come down from that, my child," said he. "That is no place for you." Jane rose and he took her in his arms. As they stood there together they heard borne to them on the summer air loud rejoicing voices crying, "Long live good Queen Mary!"

Lady Jane looked up at her father. "Can I go home?" she asked. He bent his head, but did not answer. He did not know what was in store for them.

In spite of its glitter and magnificence that was a cruel age in England. The Church was split into two parts and each hated the other and did its best to destroy it when it had the power. It was the same with the great nobles. One followed another in ruling the state and each had little mercy for a fallen leader. The great Duke of Northumberland had lost, and now his enemies sent him to the scaffold as he had earlier sent his own rivals.

The new Queen Mary, though she was later to be known as Bloody Mary, did not wish harm to befall Jane Grey. Jane and her husband were kept in the Tower as prisoners and in time might have been freed had not some new rebels in the country taken arms against Queen Mary and threatened to drive her from the throne. Then the statesmen

decided that such a rival as Jane Grey was too dangerous, and she was ordered to be tried for treason. She was found guilty, as were her father and her husband Guildford Dudley, and they were all ordered to be beheaded on Tower Hill. There on February 12, 1554, when she was only seventeen, Lady Jane was beheaded for having tried to make herself Queen. As a matter of fact she had never wanted to be Queen, nor acted except as her parents ordered.

Of the four children who had run out of the Westminster garden three years before only one was still living, the merry Barnaby Fitzpatrick. He became a great soldier, and was known as the Baron of Upper Ossory in Ireland when the Princess Elizabeth succeeded her sister Mary and became "Good Queen Bess." The world had not been very kind to young Edward Tudor nor to Guildford Dudley nor to Jane Grey. It was their misfortune to have been born so near the throne. All their lives they were really prisoners. There are few girls in history whose fate was as tragic as that of Jane, the little "Nine Days' Queen of England."

## VI

### Mary Queen of Scots

### The Girl of the French Court: 1542-1587

Henry II, King of France, was riding into his good city of Rouen. The townspeople, eager to show their loyalty and glad of a chance holiday, had decked both the streets and themselves in all the hues of the rainbow. Henry the King and his company of gallant gentlemen rode into the city by the great highway that led from Paris, and Catherine his Queen, with her ladies, came up the winding river Seine in decorated barges, taking their course in and out among the many emerald isles like slow, calm-moving swans. The King stopped by the bridge that crossed the Seine in the heart of the city, and throwing his horse's reins to a page, descended the bank to the margin of the river, and handed the Lady Catherine to shore. He was a brilliant king, with much of the charm of his father Francis I, who had met England's Bluff King Hal on the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and he bore himself towards his Queen with a noble grace. Her hand in his he led her up from the shore and over the crimson carpets the good people of Rouen had spread in their streets, to a pavilion fluttering with flags, where seats had been placed for them. Behind the King and Queen came the ladies-in-waiting and Henry's gentlemen, and each man tried to imitate his royal master and hand his lady up the steps of the pavilion with as fine an air. Several people were already awaiting the royal guests in the stand, and among them was a girl, about ten years old, who was sitting in a big armchair, and smiling at the people in the street below, at the flags and bunting, the music and the cheers.

As the King and Queen reached the top step of the pavilion the little girl rose and stood with one hand resting on the arm of her chair. Her face was pale, but her features were very lovely, so that any one would have predicted she would some day be a great beauty. Her eyes were the rich brown called chestnut, and her hair, which waved back from her forehead, was the same color. She wore a white satin cap, fastened very low on one side of her head, with a rosette of ostrich feathers, held by a ruby brooch. Her dress was of white damask, fitting closely, with a small ruff of scalloped point lace, below which hung a collar of rubies. About her waist was a girdle set with the same red stones. Her sleeves were very large and patterned with strings of pearls. She made a lovely picture as she stood before the big crimson-lined chair.

King Henry bent, and raising the girl's small hand, touched it to his lips. "How is our little Queen of Scots?" said he. "Our little bride-to-be of France?"

"Well, please your Majesty," answered the little girl, quite self-possessed, "and glad to meet your Highness here."

Then Catherine the Queen, stooping, kissed the girl on each cheek. "Dear Lady Mary, you are a very gem, as sweet as any I have ever laid eyes on. Come sit beside me and tell me of your mother."

So the ten-year-old girl, already Queen of Scotland, and lately brought to France to marry the Dauphin Francis, took her seat with the royal pair, and watched the great pageant which now wound through the Rouen streets. It was a clear, fresh noon, with just enough breeze from the Seine to ruffle the folds of the innumerable banners. First in the great procession came the friars and monks in their gray and brown robes and with their sandaled feet. Then followed the city clergy, the gorgeous Archbishop in his robes of state, with priests bearing gold and silver crosses in a long line after him, and white-clad boys swinging censers to the time of a low rhythmic chant.

"Here come the different guilds," said a gentleman of the court, who stood by the chair of small Queen Mary. "See the rich salt merchants in their gray taffeta, with black velvet caps and long white feathers."

After the salt merchants came the drapers, in white satin doublets and hose, with gold buckles gleaming in their high white caps, and after them marched the fishmongers in shining red satin. Each of the trades of Rouen went by, each arrayed in its own colors, and as the pavilion was passed caps were doffed and cheers rose at sight of the smiling Henry and Catherine and the demure-faced little Mary.

MARY STUART
At the Age of Nine

After the guilds and the soldiers, some on foot and some on horse, and all proud and dazzling as so many peacocks, came triumphal cars, representing gods and goddesses, and foreign countries. The little Scotch girl opened her eyes wide as she saw six huge elephants swing along the street, the first bearing on its broad back a tray of lighted lamps, the second a miniature church, the third a villa, the fourth a castle, the fifth a town, and the sixth a ship. After them came a troop of men dressed like Turks, waving scimitars. Then followed a car bearing a grotto with Orpheus seated within on a throne, listening to soft music played by a group of girls who sat about his feet. Finally appeared a barge bearing an imitation of a grove of trees with a great rock in the centre and Hercules, club in hand, standing by it. The car was stopped directly in front of the royal pavilion. A monster, the seven-headed hydra, crept out from behind the rock, and as soon as it was in full view Hercules attacked it. A mimic battle followed, and at its end Hercules had overcome the monster and cut off its seven heads, one of which he held up to the King. Henry flung him a purse of gold pieces, while the courtiers cheered. Catherine the Queen turned towards Mary. "Have you ever seen such sights in Scotland, *chèrie*?" she asked.

Mary shook her head. "My people are not so gay as your French," she answered.

Mary had been brought up in the customs of royal courts, and although she found this of France unusually brilliant she had felt quite at home in it since she had first come from Scotland. Her father, James V, had died when she was only a few days old, and she had been crowned nine months later. Dressed in robes of state the baby, not a year old, had been carried from her nursery to the church, and there Cardinal Beton had placed the heavy royal crown on her head, had bent her little fingers about the sceptre, and had girded her with the old historic sword that had been worn by so many fighting kings of Scotland. After that the great nobles had knelt before her and raised her tiny hand to their lips in the kiss of allegiance, and royal princes from other countries had kissed her on the cheek. The little Queen had cried, seeing so many strange people about her, and her mother had hurried her back to the nursery.

She soon grew used, however, to seeing strange people and strange happenings. When she was five years old she was betrothed to the heir of the French throne, the Dauphin, and a little later was sent to France to be educated. Her mother chose four Scotch girls of noble families to go with her, Mary Beaton, Mary Livingston, Mary Seton, and Mary Fleming, and these four were always with little Mary Stuart. They were called the "Queen's Maries," and as they grew up became famous for their beauty and their wit.

The court of France under Henry II was very gay. Tournaments had been revived, and the King and his courtiers liked to try their skill with lances in the lists. The court moved from one château to another, and at each there were hunting and hawking, dancing, archery contests, and tennis matches. Wherever the King and Queen went, there Mary Stuart went also, usually accompanied by her powerful uncles, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine. In that company of beautiful and clever women the little Scotch Queen, girl as she was, could more than hold her own. She was already famous for the loveliness of her face and figure, and for her learning. The court of Valois made her their pet, and Queen Catherine used to say, "Our petite Reinette Escossaise has but to smile to turn the heads of all Frenchmen."

At all these royal châteaux Mary met Francis the Dauphin, whom she was to marry. He was about her age, but pale and delicate, and lacking the gay spirits of his father. He loved to hear of brave deeds, and he had courage, but not the strength to do the things he wanted. Like Edward VI, the boy king who sat on the English throne at about that time, Francis had never had a fair chance to be happy. He liked Mary Stuart and she liked him, which was fortunate, but they would have been married to each other whether they had cared or not.

When Mary was sixteen and Francis a year younger they were married in the great church of Notre Dame in Paris. It was one of the most magnificent weddings Paris had ever seen. The young Queen of Scotland was dressed in white, with a blue mantle and a train covered with pearls. On her head she wore a royal crown set with diamonds, rubies, pearls, and emeralds, and at her throat hung a matchless jewel known as "the Great Harry," which had belonged to her great-grandfather, Henry VII of England. The church was a sea of jewels, for in those days men wore almost as many precious stones as women, and the great stone pillars set off a blaze of costumes that reveled in all the colors of the rainbow. The nobles of Scotland were there as well as those of France, and as soon as the ceremony was over Mary turned and greeted her boy husband as Francis I, King of Scotland. Handfuls of gold coins were scattered to the crowds in the streets as the bridal party left the church, and heralds announced the coming of the "Queen-Dauphiness," and the "King-Dauphin."

That afternoon there were masquerades in the streets, and at five o'clock a great wedding supper in the Palais de Justice. The men wore suits of frosted cloth of gold, the women gowns that were stiff with jewels. Each dish was presented to the diners to the sound of music. After the supper came dancing, and then a masque that was the finest the court of France had ever seen. First there came into the hall the seven planets of the skies, Mercury in white satin, with golden girdle and wings, carrying his wand, or caduceus, in his hand. Mars appeared in armor, and Venus in sea-green flowing draperies as if she had just risen from the waves. After the planets came a procession of twelve hobby-horses, ridden by twelve boy princes, among whom were the Dauphin's two younger brothers, later to be known as Charles IX and Henry III. One of the toy horses was ridden by eight-year-old Henry of Guise, whose golden hair and beautiful blue eyes won the admiration of the great Italian poet Tasso, and who was to be the last chief of the house of Guise and to fall, struck down by the blows of the forty-five guardsmen, as he passed through the halls of the château of Blois to meet King Henry III, the little boy who rode so gaily by him now. Last of all there came into the room six ships, decked with cloth of gold and crimson velvet, their sails of silver gauze fastened to masts of silver. The ships were slowly steered down the hall, each gliding as though carried over gently swelling waters, and the sails of each filling with the breath of an artificial breeze. On each ship were two chairs of state, in one of which sat a prince in cloth of gold, with a mask over his eyes. As the ships sailed by the groups of ladies and young girls each prince seized a lady and placed her on the chair by his side. King Henry, like a skilful mariner, steered his ship close to the marble table by which the little bride sat, and reaching down drew her on board his vessel. The Dauphin caught Queen Catherine, and each of the other princes chose a belle from the group of lovely ladies. Then, as if blown by favoring gales, the ships sailed on about the great room, and out through the archway to the dancing hall. The great ball that followed was worthy of the day. The dazzling bride danced the pavon, a form of minuet which was very stately and graceful. Her train was twelve yards long and was borne after her by a gentleman, so that she had full chance to show her skill and grace.

Mary, sixteen years old, now Queen of Scotland and Dauphiness of France, was quite content with what was already hers, and had no wish to conquer other crowns. But the grown-up people about her were always scheming, and cared absolutely nothing for her wishes where matters of state were concerned. So, when Mary the Queen of England died and the Princess Elizabeth ascended the English throne, Henry II of France insisted that his daughter-in-law was the rightful sovereign of the British Isles. A great tournament was being given in honor of the marriage of Elizabeth of France to Philip II of Spain, and the French King had Mary borne to her place on the royal balcony in a car of triumph with the banners of Scotland and England together flying over her head, and heralds in front of her crying, "Hail, hail, all hail the Queen of England!" The people took up the cry and soon all those at the tournament had hailed Mary under this new title. Little did they think that news of this, carried by sure couriers to Elizabeth in London, would cause her to nurse thoughts of revenge against her cousin during many years to come.

Hailed by this new title the innocent girl-queen Mary took her place in the royal balcony and the tournament began. It was an afternoon in early summer and directly before her stretched the green carpet of the lists where the knights were to try their skill at arms. The King himself was to set his lance in rest, and was already riding up and down at his end of the lists on a curveting bay recently sent him by the Duke of Savoy. Each knight wore the colors of some lady, Henry the black and white of the Lady Diane de Poitiers, the Duke of Guise red and white, the Duke of Ferrara yellow and red, the Duke of Nemours yellow and black.

It was a stirring sight to see the knights, clad in full armor, the visors of their helmets drawn, grip their long heavy lances under their arms, and setting spurs to their great chargers, dash swiftly across the field and meet midway in a terrific clash. Lance rang on shield or helm or breastplate, the riders struggled to hold their seats in the saddle, and then if neither was unhorsed they rode past each other to turn at the farther end of the lists, and prepare for the next onset. The little Queen, with her four Maries about her, watched the dashes and the shivering of lances with excitement in her eyes, and clapped her hands or sighed as a favorite knight came off victorious or was hurled from his saddle to the ground. But that day all the knights were powerful, and though each challenged the others in turn none could claim to be the absolute champion.

The sun was sinking low, and the knights had given their lances to their squires when King Henry rode across to the royal balcony, and raising his visor, spoke to a man who was sitting near Mary. "Come, my lord Count of Montgomery," said the King. "I would fain break a lance with you. To horse, for the honor of your lady and the glory of France!"

The Count rose from his seat. "It is an honor, sire, to meet so great a champion in the lists, but to-day I must crave pardon. The hour is over late for me."

"The light holds well, my lord. 'Twill see one meeting," answered Henry. "I would have the court see how well Montgomery can hold a lance."

"It is most gracious of you, sire. Were the time otherwise——" It was quite evident that the Count was anxious not to meet the King.

But Henry was impatient of refusal. He interrupted, and said with a hasty gesture, "An I must command I will. To horse, my lord, and with what speed you may."

There was nothing for the Count to do but bow, whisper an excuse to the lady at his side, and leaving the pavilion seek the tents. In a short time he rode out into the field, his armor shining golden in the sunset, his lance in his gauntleted hands, a favor of blue and orange ribbons fluttering at the crest of his helmet. Meantime the King had curbed his horse to a place before the balcony where the Queen sat. Catherine leaned forward. "Have you not ridden enough to-day, sire?" she asked. "I would beg you to stop."

"One more joust," said Henry, "and this one, madame, in honor of yourself."

"But, sire," she persisted, "you cannot excel the deeds you have already done to-day, and now you should join the ladies."

Henry, however, with a smile, shook his head. "This one shall end the day," he said, and rode to his end of the course.

Mary Seton leaned forward to speak to her young mistress. "The Count of Montgomery, being Captain of the Scottish Guard, dared not refuse, with you here to see," she whispered. "See how he reins up his charger. He is young, and not anxious to break his lance on the King's coat-of-mail."

Montgomery took his place, lowered his visor, and set his lance. At the opposite end the King did the same. Then at a signal each touched his spurs to his horse, and rode furiously fast to the onset. There was a crash, the shock of steel, and a cry from the audience. The Count had driven his lance at the King's helmet, and it had broken short. The blow sent the King reeling and he was whirled about so fast that he had difficulty to keep his seat. The Count rode on, but the King, only too evidently dazed, swayed in his saddle, and then fell forward on his charger's neck. A dozen men sprang forward, and catching the King, helped him to the ground. A glance showed what had happened. Montgomery's lance had broken and a splinter of the steel had been driven through an eyehole of the helmet into the King's head just over his right eye. The men took off his armor and carried him as gently as they could into the palace.

Thus suddenly the celebrations of the Princess Elizabeth's wedding came to an end. The young and reluctant Count of Montgomery had given the King his death wound, and a few days later the spirited monarch died. The triumphal arches and banners were torn down, and the bells of Paris tolled slowly where they had rung joyful peals so short a time before.

So the Dauphin Francis and Mary Stuart became King and Queen of France. He was sixteen and she seventeen. They were too young to reign and Francis was much too delicate. Moreover there were two or three grown-up people who had no intention of letting the boy and girl have their own way. Behind the throne stood the boy's mother, Queen Catherine de' Medici, and the unscrupulous and ambitious uncles of the girl, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine. They headed the Catholic party in the kingdom and they were pursuing the hapless Huguenots with torch and sword. Careless of the young King's wishes they plunged France into terrible civil wars wherein massacres were a matter of almost daily occurrence.

Francis and Mary were crowned in the old Cathedral of Rheims, where Joan of Arc had once seen her Dauphin crowned, and over the royal pair hung the banners of France, Scotland, and England. Then they traveled south to the château of Blois, and Francis amused himself with hunting while the Queen and her four Maries either rode out after the gentlemen to watch the sport or stayed at home to listen to the poems and songs of troubadours or walked on the banks of the small winding river Loire. She was more beautiful than ever, and very fond of her husband Francis, and their little court, made up largely of boys and girls nearly their own age, enjoyed itself thoroughly while the dark figures of Catherine and Mary's uncles were free to plunge the kingdom into blood.

The house of Valois had spent all its strength, and the four sons of the gallant Henry II, three of whom were to be kings in turn, were fated to be weak and sickly. Francis drooped and pined, and a year had barely passed before his reign was ended, and Mary, patient nurse at his side, was made a widow. Charles, the second brother, came to the throne, only to find it a place of weariness and regret, and to shudder at the horrors of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve, planned by his mother. Perhaps it was as well for Mary that her reign in France had ended. The land had fallen into evil days, wherein there was little happiness for any one.

The Queen of Scots, still only a girl, went back to her northern home, and the people of that mountainous land were glad to welcome her to the old historic Palace of Holyrood in Edinburgh. But even when she was leaving France her cousin Elizabeth the English Queen showed her enmity. Mary had asked to be allowed to pass through England on her way to Scotland, but this Elizabeth refused, and Mary was obliged to make the long sea-voyage.

The youth and beauty and the sweet manner of the young Queen won all Scotch hearts to her. She was at once beset by royal suitors; the King of Sweden, the Archduke Charles, son of the Holy Roman Emperor, and Don Carlos, son of Philip II of Spain, all wanted to marry her. In the midst of the plots and plans of her statesmen the young Queen took matters into her own hands and married her cousin, the handsome Earl of Darnley, whom she loved with all the passion of her nature.

Though the Scotch people had longed to have their Queen home again they did not make her happy when she lived with them. Plots and counterplots surrounded her, the leaders of the Catholics and the Protestants were continually fighting over her, and the dashing Darnley proved a weak and vicious man. Mary did what she could to steer her course through these troubled waters, but she was met by treachery on every hand. At last she was betrayed by some powerful men who wished to be rid of her and to rule the kingdom as guardians for her infant son, Prince

James. She was delivered over to the English, and charges were brought against her of having conspired against Queen Elizabeth. Her judges found her guilty; the English Queen, remembering how Mary had been proclaimed in France as Queen of England, turned a deaf ear to all pleas for mercy, and so Mary, the beautiful, heroic Queen of Scotland, came to her death on the scaffold. Like so many others who had been brought up in royal palaces in that glittering but cruel age she met a tragic fate not so much on account of her own acts as through the bitter hatreds of other people.

Mary's son became King James VI of Scotland, and when Queen Elizabeth died King James I of England. In France the two young brothers of her boy husband, Charles IX and Henry III, had met the same untimely deaths as that young King, and the throne passed to the valiant Henry of Navarre. The house of Guise had fallen, and the bloody civil wars were ending. There was little left of that gay court of France where Mary had seen such splendors as a girl. Like the thunder-storm that ends a summer day tragedy too often closed those pageants. So it had been with the life of the famous Scotch Queen, who had ruled all hearts as a girl in France.

## VII

### Pocahontas

### The Girl of the Virginia Woods: 1595-1617

Deep snow covered the fields about the encampment of the Algonquin Indians on the banks of the river James. The snow had been falling for days during January, and made the long, low houses of bark and boughs look like so many great white ridges high above the ice-bound river. They were big houses, these "long houses" as they were called, each one large enough to hold twenty families. Each family had a compartment to itself, with sleeping bunks built against the walls, and curtains of deerskin to shield the family from the open passage which ran the length of the house. At different places in this passage fire-pits were built on the earth floor, and each pit gave heat enough to warm four Indian families and an opportunity for them to cook their meals. Some smoke went out at rude chimneys made in the roof, but much of it stayed in and filtered through to the different living-rooms. Each of these "long houses" was the home of from eighty to one hundred Indians.

The river James was called by the Indians the Pow-ha-tan, and the Algonquin tribe that lived upon its shores went by the same name. The tribe's chief settlement was the village of Wero-woco-moco, and here the famous old chief, called by the white men Pow-ha-tan but by the Indians Wa-bun-so-na-cook, was usually to be found. He had built there a "long house" for his own family, and at one end of it was the council room in which the various chiefs of the tribe met with him to discuss all matters relating to tribe affairs. Here they spent much of the time smoking about a fire-pit when the snow was falling and the hunting season at an end.

Before the council-house a group of boys were playing "snow-snake" and tumbling about in the drifts on a raw afternoon in January. Suddenly there appeared an Indian runner, coming noiselessly out of the woods and crossing the open space where the boys were playing. "It's Ra-bun-ta," cried one of them, and making a snowball threw it at the slim young Indian. Others took up the cry and pelted him with snowballs, while one named Nan-ta-qua-us dashed forward and tried to trip him with the knob-headed stick they had been using in their game of "snow-snake."

Ra-bun-ta, however, kicked the stick away and gave the boy a push which sent him sprawling. He dodged the snowballs and ran on without a word to the door of the old chief's house. Pushing the matting aside he dashed in and spied the chief sitting with other braves about a fire at the farther end of the house. Other Indians were lounging about nearer fires and children were playing up and down the passage. Some of these were turning somersaults in the open spaces between the fires while others were trying to balance on their heads and walk on their hands.

As the runner darted along the passage a girl, dressed in buckskin, came whirling along turning handsprings. Ra-bun-ta leaped to one side, but the girl's feet struck full against his breast, and with such force that he was thrown backward while the girl went tumbling to the ground. Both fell sprawling just clear of a fire-pit. There followed a great roar of laughter, the other children danced about in delight, while the chiefs, loving a rough joke, leaned back and ridiculed the upset messenger. "Knocked down by a girl! Oh, for shame, Ra-bun-ta!" called one as the young man slowly picked himself up. "You'd make a splendid brave," cried another.

But the old chief, taking his pipe from his mouth, looked at the girl on the floor. "My daughter, you have nearly killed our brother Ra-bun-ta with your foolery," said he. "That is hardly young girl's play. Why will you be such a little *po-ca-hun-tas*!"

"Po-ca-hun-tas! Po-ca-hun-tas!" called the other children delightedly, using the word which in the Algonquin tongue meant "little tomboy."

Ra-bun-ta, laughing, turned quickly and made a dash at the little girl, but she jumped aside in time to avoid him. "A *po-ca-hun-tas* must always be on guard," she exclaimed as he stepped past her.

The runner now turned and faced the chief Pow-ha-tan. "Oh, strong one," said he, "the feet of the little princess Ma-ta-oka, whom you have now renamed Po-ca-hun-tas, are more dangerous to me than the 'snake-stick' of her brother Nun-ta-qua-us. I have with difficulty escaped from these two with my life, but it is well I have been able to do so, for I have news for you. I have traveled fast over the snow to tell you. The braves who are with your mighty brother O-pe-chan-ca-nough have seized the pale-face chieftain in the swamp-lands of the Chicka-hominy and are even now bringing him here to this your council-house."

Pow-ha-tan nodded his head. "It is well, Ra-bun-ta," said he. "We will be ready for him."

The young Indian messenger bowed and made his way to one of the nearer fire-pits. As he warmed his hands over the blaze other young braves crowded about him, asking him countless questions. One wanted to know if it was true that the white chief wore a headpiece of heavy iron, and another if the chief had used magic against the braves, and a third if he was indeed half as tall again as any Indian chief. Ra-bun-ta answered their questions as best he could, and then, squatting by the fire while he ate the parched Indian corn that the little Ma-ta-oka brought him, he told how the "Great Captain" had been surprised and taken prisoner in the swamps by O-pe-chan-ca-nough and two hundred of his braves. "The Great Captain" had only had two white warriors with him, and these had been slain by the Indian chief, but then the white chief had caught his Indian guide and held him in front of him as a shield, and so saved his life while he shot flames through his magic fire-tube. Finally the Captain's foot had slipped and he had fallen into a mud-hole, and then the braves had found it an easy matter to surround him and make him prisoner.

They found his clothes shot through and through with arrows, but the Captain as brave and confident as ever.

The news that the great White Captain was coming to the village caused great excitement. The Indians admired courage and craftiness above all other qualities, and this pale-face was known to be extraordinarily brave and cunning. Reports of this Captain John Smith, the governor of the little settlement of white people that was called Virginia, had spread far and wide among the Indians, and he was undoubtedly the white chief whom the Indians most admired and feared. All that night and the next day the Pow-ha-tans talked of Captain Smith, and the chief's daughter Ma-ta-oka, or Po-ca-hun-tas as she was now called in jest, listened eagerly to all the stories about him. Already she thought of him as an all-conquering hero.

The Indians were all waiting out-of-doors when the chief O-pe-chan-ca-nough and his braves reached the village with their prisoner. Wild yells rent the air as they caught sight of the tall white man, walking fearlessly among the red men, his head held high, and his eyes smiling. He was led to the council-house, and there a great feast was spread before him, which he shared with Pow-ha-tan and the other chiefs of the tribe. Po-ca-hun-tas, watching secretly from a corner, saw that the white man ate heartily, although she knew he must be in doubt as to what fate lay in store for him.

Pow-ha-tan was a wise chieftain and he knew that if he should kill Captain Smith he would cause a relentless hatred among the white settlers towards his own tribe. He knew the white men were strong and he preferred to have them as friends rather than as enemies in his wars with his tribe's chief foes, the Manna-ho-acks. When a prisoner was not killed he was usually made a slave, but Pow-ha-tan thought the Captain too big a man to use in that way, and so he decided to treat him as a guest, talk with him for several days about affairs between the settlers and his tribe, and then send him home with many presents.

To Captain Smith's surprise he was invited to regard himself as a guest in Pow-ha-tan's house, and the following day was adopted by the chief as a son, and given a large grant of land in the neighborhood. The old chief's daughter seemed much interested in him, and was always waiting to serve him in any way, occasionally asking him questions which showed her great curiosity in the white people. The Captain could not help liking her for her kindness to him, and asked the chief her name. The latter hesitated, for Indians did not like to let their real names be known to these strange people. "She is called Po-ca-hun-tas," he answered evasively. And to Captain Smith she was known as Po-ca-hun-tas from that time.

The Indian girl seemed sorry the Captain was leaving when he said good-bye to her the next day, and wished him a safe journey back to the Virginia settlement. Captain Smith gave her a few small gifts he had managed to carry with him, and he promised to bring her more when he should come again. With the rest of the children she stood out in the snow to wave him a farewell as he left the village in company with two of Pow-ha-tan's guides, and that night she dreamed of the "Great Captain" as a hero in a far country doing prodigious deeds of valor. To her he now seemed the most wonderful man in the world.

After the excitement of the "Great Captain's" visit the village of Wero-woco-moco sank back to its ordinary life, and Po-ca-hun-tas shared the work of the other girls, although being the daughter of the chief she was relieved of much of the drudgery that fell to most of them. Two things she particularly wished for now, the one that she might see the white Captain again, and the other that she might visit a white man's village and see all the wonders she had heard so much about. Winter changed to spring and the Indian braves went hunting, and spring deepened into summer, and in the early fall her first wish was granted, for Captain Smith with some friends came to Pow-ha-tan's village to invite that chief to go with them to the white man's town of Jamestown to be crowned by the English people as king of the Pow-ha-tan tribe. The Captain had not forgotten the twelve-year old Indian princess and had brought her a necklace of coral beads and bracelets set with red stones, and in thanks she led ten other girls of her own age in an Indian dance before the Captain and his friends, a graceful dance about a fire in the forest to the accompaniment of gay Indian songs and the music of the Indian drum. By now Po-ca-hun-tas and Captain Smith had become great friends, and Pow-ha-tan, watching them with his shrewd eyes, decided that if he should ever need to ask a favor of the white settlers this little daughter of his might prove the best of messengers to send.

It was only a few weeks afterward that some of Pow-ha-tan's braves were made prisoners by the settlers through fear that a conspiracy was being planned against them. The old chief sent his daughter with Ra-bun-ta to Jamestown, and she begged the Captain to free the captive braves. Like Pow-ha-tan John Smith knew when to be gracious, and he at once gave orders for the release of the Indians. Then he entertained Po-ca-hun-tas as though she were a royal princess. She met the white girls and boys who lived at Jamestown and learned their games, teaching them in exchange the sports of the Algonquin children. One day when Captain Smith came into the market-place square he found his young guest leading a line of boys who were turning handsprings. A crowd had gathered to watch them go round and round the square in a great circle, the Indian princess at the head, turning better wheels than any of the boys. She had such a good time that she came again and again, sometimes on matters of business with Ra-bun-ta, sometimes with her brother Nun-ta-qua-us, and sometimes with her girl friends. With each visit her admiration for Captain John Smith increased.

Those were times when there was little real safety for either Indians or white men. The settlers were far too often greedy and selfish, taking land as they pleased, regardless of the fact that it had belonged to other men for generations, and breaking their agreements with the Indians as though a promise given to a redskin was of no value. What the settlers wanted they tried to get by hook or crook, and so the Indians soon came to distrust, and then to fear and hate them. Certain discontented men in Jamestown also were planning to rid the colony of its strong governor Captain Smith, and conspired with restless Indians to capture and kill him when he was unprepared. Some of these Indians were of the Algonquin tribe, and one day Po-ca-hun-tas, stealing silently through the woods, came upon a meeting of them and overheard their plans.

This was in midwinter of the year 1609. Provisions had run low in Jamestown and the settlers were almost starving. Captain Smith, trusting to the old friendship of Pow-ha-tan, left the colony and journeyed through the forest to Wero-woco-moco. There he met Pow-ha-tan and made a treaty with him, by which he was to receive a supply of corn to carry back to the settlement with him. The chief said it would take him several days to collect the provisions, and so the Captain pitched his camp in the woods by the York River to wait until the promised corn was sent out to him. But meantime certain braves had come to Pow-ha-tan and shown him how easy it would be to deal the pale-faces a serious blow by killing their leader and letting the people suffer for supplies. Pow-ha-tan listened, considered how much harm the white men had already done his Algonquins, and at last nodded his head. None of those seated at the council-fire knew that the sharp-eared Po-ca-hun-tas was hiding close behind one of the deerskin curtains that hung at her bedroom door.

The braves ceased their conference and scattered for the night. Then the girl stole out from her room and glided down the passageway to the door. There was no moon and she could cross the open space about the houses without observation. She slipped into the forest, and with scarcely a crackle of twigs to mark her progress over the dead leaves she made her way in and out through the trees, following the trail to the camp on the river with the sure instinct born and bred in her.

Now and then she would stop and listen or glance up through the bare branches at the star-strewn sky. Then she would turn and steal on again, fleet-footed as a deer. So she covered several miles and came near the river. She stopped to listen and then stepped on again. Soon she caught the light of a camp-fire shining through the trees.

She stood behind the trunk of a giant oak and looked at the little camp before her. At the fire sat a man, his gun resting across his arms. Near him lay a dozen other men, wrapped in blankets and apparently asleep. She knew the man on watch was Captain Smith.

She took a step forward and a dry twig crackled ever so little under her tread. The Captain turned like the wind, his gun raised in defense. "Wake up!" he cried. "Watch! I heard a noise!"

The girl took another step, holding up her hands. "It is I, Po-ca-hun-tas," she said. "I come alone to speak with you."

The Captain lowered his gun. "Come, Po-ca-hun-tas," he answered. "You are always welcome."

She stepped into the clearing, and the men, glad to find only one girl where they had feared to see a line of savage Indians, sank back on the ground.

"What would you say to me, Po-ca-hun-tas?" asked the Captain, extending his hand in welcome to her. "I hope you have come to tell me that the corn and the good cheer will soon be here."

She took his hand and stood very close to him. "Be guarded, oh, my father," she answered. "The corn and the good cheer will come just as they have been promised to you, but even now my father, chief of the Pow-ha-tans, is gathering all his power to fall upon you and your men here and kill you. If you would live, get you away from these woods at once."

"Is it so?" said the Captain. "Then, men, we must be up and off before the twigs crack again. How can I thank you, Po-ca-hun-tas, for this warning?" He thought of the Indian's love of presents and put his hand in the pocket of his coat, but there was nothing there. Then his eyes fell on the small compass which hung from a chain at his neck. It was very valuable to him, but he wanted to show the girl his appreciation of the greatness of her service. He took it from his neck and held it out to her. "My daughter," said he, "three times you have come to me in Jamestown to warn me of dangers that waited for me, and now again you have saved my life, coming alone, and at risk of your own young life through the lonely woods and in this gloomy night to warn me. Take this present, I pray you, from me, and let it always speak to you of the love for you of Captain Smith."

All Indians looked upon the compass, or "path-teller" as they called it, as an instrument of magic, and as Po-ca-hun-tas saw this present gleaming in the Captain's hand she would have liked to own it. But she shook her head.

"No, no, *Cau-co-rouse*," said she, using the Indian word for "Great Captain." "I must not take it. If it should be seen by my tribesmen, or even by my father, the chief, I should be as but dead to them, for they would know that I had warned you whom they have sworn to kill, and so they would kill me too. Stay not to parley, my father, but be gone at once."

"It is well we should," agreed the Captain, and he gave orders to his men to prepare for the march at once.

"Good-bye," said Po-ca-hun-tas, giving him her hand again, after the fashion of the white people.

"Good-bye, my daughter," he answered. "May we soon meet again when there will be no danger in the meeting."

Po-ca-hun-tas slipped away into the forest as silently as she had come, and threaded her way safely home to her own "long house." No one knew she had been out of bed. When the Algonquin braves, in war paint, reached the bank of the York River they found only the embers of a camp-fire to show that the white men had waited for them there.


POCAHONTAS
*From the only authentic portrait*

Captain Smith got safely back to Jamestown, but he found many of his own people discontented, and soon afterward, tired out by the continual difficulties that beset him in Virginia, he gave up his position there and sailed back to England. Po-ca-hun-tas heard the news and decided that she had better keep away from Jamestown now that the settlers were hostile to her father and her great protector was gone. Troubles were increasing between the Indians and the white men, and neither trusted the others any more.

When she was sixteen Po-ca-hun-tas was visiting friends in another village on the James when she was suddenly made prisoner by a man named Captain Argall, a trader, who decided to hold the Indian girl as hostage for the friendship of Pow-ha-tan. He took her to Jamestown, and there Po-ca-hun-tas was given a certain amount of liberty and met again some of the boys and girls she had played with before. They all liked her, and although she missed her free life in the woods she found so much that was new and strange to interest her that she was not sorry to stay for a time in Jamestown. Here she soon met a young Englishman named John Rolfe, who was much attracted by her, and who at length asked her to marry him. She consented, and a short time after their marriage she sailed with him to visit his home across seas in England.

The people of London had seen few Indians and were very curious to learn more about them. They were charmed with Mistress John Rolfe, or the Princess Po-ca-hon-tas of Pow-ha-tan, as they liked to call her. Captain John Smith met her again and told his friends how she had saved his life that night on the York River. The story spread, and the Princess Po-ca-hon-tas found herself a heroine in England. But she bore her honors very modestly, and was much happier alone with her devoted husband than when she was being stared at by crowds of strange people. She did not live to go back to Virginia or see her own tribesmen again, but died in England when she was only twenty-two.

Ma-ta-oka, or Pocahontas as we call her, was a real heroine, one of the few daughters we know of that brave, romantic race which so quickly vanished from America after the white settlers came. Many among the Indians were cruel and bloodthirsty, many were treacherous and sly, but Pocahontas we know was warm-hearted and true, faithful to the great Captain she had admired before she had even seen him and risking her life to save him from her father. It is fortunate that history has kept her story, for we must always think more kindly of the Indians when we remember the little daughter of Powhatan, nicknamed Pocahontas by her father because she was such a tomboy.

## VIII

### Priscilla Alden

### The Girl of Plymouth: About 1604—after 1680

Two girls stood on the deck of the *Mayflower*, hand clasped in hand, their eyes fixed on a narrow strip of grayish shore beyond the waste of tossing ocean. About them stood others, men and women and a few children, all looking in the same direction, wonder and satisfaction and a certain awe in their faces. They had been at sea for nearly thirteen weeks, and during most of that time their little ship had been buffeted by constant storms.

"Mary dear," said one of the girls to the other, "can you really believe that yonder low line is land?"

"I doubted if it could be when John first pointed it out to me," answered the other, "but now I'm sure of it. I can almost see the breakers on the shore. Do you know, Priscilla, that that's where you and I are to live and that we may never see England again?" Her hand tightened on her friend's and her dark eyes turned towards her.

"Our home!" murmured Priscilla softly. "It looks bleak enough from here. I hope we find it pleasant country inland."

All over the *Mayflower* men and women were pointing out the shore to one another and calling it their home. They had come from England to find a land where they might worship God in their own way, and had sailed over the wide and stormy Western sea to found a new colony in this new and almost unknown land.

Columbus had had great faith when he held his course to the west in spite of the protests of all his men, but these simple Pilgrims had no less faith when they started out to make a new home in an unexplored continent where other settlers had already met with famine, pestilence, and savage redmen. They were a brave, deeply religious people, ready to stand the hardships that lay in wait for them, confident that God was with them and that they were doing what was right for them to do. This was the spirit that had given them courage to face many difficulties, for already they had met with troubles that would have daunted less determined people. They had had two ships when they had sailed from Southampton on the fifth of August, 1620, but at the very outset the smaller vessel, the *Speedwell*, had sprung a leak, and had to put back to port. A second time the two ships had started, but again the *Speedwell* proved unseaworthy, and they had returned to Plymouth. This time there were disputes among the officers and some of the men had left, but the *Mayflower* had sailed at last on September sixth with one hundred and two on board. Then they had met with bad weather, so that instead of reaching the new world in the autumn as they had planned, it was already November before they sighted the shore of America. It took brave, persevering spirits to face the odds that stood in front of them.

Presently a young man came up to the two girls. "We're farther north than we thought to land," said he. "The Dutch settlements lie to the south. But they've decided to try this place now we're here, and by night some may set foot on shore."

"Do you think we can go in the first boat, John?" asked Mary Chilton eagerly.

John Alden shook his head. "Only a few of the men are to land with Miles Standish. They're to explore and come back to report. There may be Indians settled about here."

"I wish I were a man," sighed Mary.

"There'll be plenty for girls to do once we're ashore," answered John.

"We've waited a month," put in Priscilla. "I guess we can wait a few days more to land."

John Alden moved away to examine his matchlock gun for the hundredth time, and the two girls, who were close friends, tried to wait as patiently as they could while the *Mayflower* drew in towards shore. They went down to the cabin for their simple dinner and then returned on deck. Now the land stretched before them in a clear line, a low, barren shore that looked of little promise. The chill November day made the country seem most inhospitable, and many on board were already homesick for the green fields and flowering meadows of England. Mary Chilton and Priscilla Mullins moved about among the women and children, cheering them with their own hopefulness.

By nightfall the *Mayflower* had rounded a point of the coast and come into a small land-locked harbor, where it seemed as if a thousand vessels might find safe anchorage. Here the shores appeared more promising, and many eager eyes strained through the dusk to see what the site of their future home might be like. It was too dark to send explorers ashore, so the *Mayflower* dropped anchor, and the Pilgrims prepared to go to bed. Before they slept they gathered in the cabin and with bent heads listened to John Carver give thanks to God that they had been brought safely across the sea and in sight of their promised land.

Next day Priscilla and Mary watched Captain Miles Standish and a score of men lower the shallop and set out towards shore. John Alden smiled up at the girls as they hung over the rail, and they waved their kerchiefs to him and to the ruddy-faced Captain Standish who stood up in the bow to direct the shallop's course. Then they had to wait as patiently as they could to learn what the explorers might report.

Standish's party spent two days exploring the land about the harbor, which formed the tip of what we now call Cape

Cod. They found that the land was fertile, as was shown by the fact that the Indians had cleared much of the ground for planting and had left a magazine of corn. They caught a distant glimpse of a few Indians, but the latter fled as soon as they saw Captain Standish's men.

When the explorers returned to the *Mayflower* and made their report the leaders of the Pilgrims were in two minds as to whether to settle on this shore or to seek another site farther to the west. Those who wanted to settle here spoke of the good harbor for ships, the fact that the Indians had already tilled the soil, and the chances that they might find good whale fishing off the coast. They added that they were tired with the long sea voyage and unfit to go further, and that with winter almost at hand exploration would be very difficult. But the others objected that it would be unwise to settle permanently without having looked a little farther to the west, and the larger number of the leaders agreed with this view. Therefore on the next day the shallop was sent out again with eighteen men on board to explore more of the coast. Eight men stayed on the shallop while the rest landed and went along the shore. Their journey lasted three days, and on the third morning the land party had just started to eat breakfast by their camp-fire when suddenly they heard a series of wild war-cries, and a shower of arrows struck all about them. At the same time Indians in ambush on the beach sent their arrows at the men in the small boat. Captain Standish and his men seized their muskets and in a moment more the Indians were flying before the fire that leaped from the muzzles. Not one of the Pilgrims was wounded, and soon they were on their way along the shore again, this time more careful to keep a watch for the hidden redmen. Presently they embarked in the shallop and sailed across the bay, reaching a place nearly opposite the point of Cape Cod. Here they found fertile land, a good supply of water, and a protected harbor. It seemed the ideal spot for which they had been looking, and they decided to make their new home here. The Indian name of this place, Accomac, had already been changed to Plymouth, which it happened was also the name of the English seaport from which the Pilgrims had finally set sail.

The people on board the *Mayflower* eagerly hailed the returning explorers. They were growing impatient at being kept on the ship when the land stretched invitingly before them. Priscilla and Mary, with the rest, heard Captain Standish tell of the place he had discovered, and shortly afterward they themselves saw it from the vessel's deck. Now all was excitement. The different families made ready to leave the ship which had been their home for nearly seven weeks and set up their household goods on shore. In the first boat load went Priscilla and Mary Chilton, and Mary was the first woman to set foot on Plymouth soil. The two girls looked about them, at the long beach, the cleared corn land, and the high hill beyond with its commanding view over the wide bay. Priscilla turned to her father. "How strange that this should be our home!" said she. "And yet I feel almost a love for it already."

"I pray you may, my daughter," he answered, "for it is like to be the only home any of us are henceforth to know."

If it had taken courage to face the perils of the sea it took scarcely less to face those of the new land. It was already December and growing more and more cold with each day. Their store of provisions was almost gone, and there could be no harvest here until spring. Some of the women and children were sick, and none knew how the Indians might look upon their coming. But the little band of Pilgrims set to work with stout hearts, determined to carry out the purpose on which they had started. They chose John Carver Governor and Miles Standish Captain of their troops, and set to work to build log houses for the winter's shelter.

Priscilla was strong and she helped her father in his work during that long hard winter. There was plenty for all to do, but many had not the strength to accomplish what was needed. There was a great deal of illness and very little good food. The weather made it almost impossible for the men to hunt or to find wild fruits, and they had neglected to bring fishing-tackle with them. Their provisions were eked out with shellfish, but it was hard to gather these in the cold water. Other colonies in the new world had already been forced to give up their homes in fear of starvation, but this band held on, although half their number died, and at one time there were only seven who were not sick. Fortunately the Indians gave them little trouble. One day one of them walked into the village and spent the night there, showing friendliness, although Captain Standish watched him closely, having little faith in his pretensions. A day or two later he returned bringing five others, and then there came another named Tis quantum, who had once been taken as a prisoner to London, and who understood something of the strange white people and their ways. With his aid a treaty was made with Massasoit, the chief of the Indians in that part of the country, and each side agreed to live in harmony and concord with the other. Many of the Indians already had a superstitious fear of the men from across the sea, not only on account of their wonderful "fire-tubes" but for another reason. Some Indians had a few years before captured a French trading-ship, and killed all the crew but five, whom they kept as prisoners. One of these had warned the redmen that the God of the white people would not let these wrongs go without some punishment, and very soon afterward pestilence had broken out on the coast and killed many of the Indians who lived there. Those who survived recalled the Frenchman's words and believed that pestilence was a weapon like the "fire-tube" which the white men kept in their camps to use against their enemies. Therefore they were very careful how they treated these new arrivals who had settled at Accomac.

But if the winter was hard and starvation stared them in the face and sickness was rife in Plymouth the Pilgrims worked on, confident that they were doing the will of God. This was the spirit of young as well as of old, and the thought that must often have cheered Priscilla as she looked from the door of the rude log-cabin over leagues of snow to a lowering sky. But there were bright hours even in that first winter. Sometimes Captain Standish or John Alden or others of the men would bring logs of red cedar from the near-by forest to the Mullins cottage and pile them on the hearth. Then they would have a great fire and all the family would gather round it, and neighbors, seeing the smoke, would come through the path cut in the deep snow to the Mullins door and join in the warmth and the stories at the hearth. Many a day Priscilla and Mary spent at the spinning-wheel, talking of old play-mates in England while their feet kept the wheels going and the carded wool piled up about them on the floor. At other times, when the weather was clearer, they would go down to the beach and walk its length until they came to a great rock. There they would sit and talk of what they would do when summer came and the sea should be calm and the woods full of wild flowers. Sometimes they would sing, for both girls had good voices, sending the words of the old hymns of the

Pilgrims far out across the breakers. Slowly the winter passed and Priscilla had her first taste of spring in New England.

Hope sprang up fresh in the hearts of these Pilgrims as they saw the snows melt and the days grow longer. They began to build bigger and stronger houses and to prepare the fields for crops. Whenever they could be spared from home Priscilla and Mary and the few other girls in the village went out to the woods. There the trees were putting forth their buds, and one day they came upon a fragrant rose-colored flower which they had never seen before and which they named the Mayflower. Soon the woods were full of them, and the girls gathered armfuls to take back to their log homes. Beyond the circle of green woods they found many ponds and on their banks another white and red flower called the azalea, and in the water were wide lily pads and still farther beyond bushes of the soft snowy pink-hued laurel. In the evenings they would climb to the hill back of Plymouth and, seated there, look over the tiny gathering of houses to the open bay where the light high up in the rigging of the *Mayflower* shone like a planet low down in the sky. There they would talk of England, and of how by this time the hawthorne must be in bloom and the hedgerows all in blossom and the small stone churches mantled in ivy and the lark singing as he soared above the tower. But although they talked much about England, they were already very fond of their new home, and when they heard that the *Mayflower* was to sail back to England they did not say that they would like to sail on her.

The *Mayflower* left in the early spring and at nearly the same time John Carver, the first Governor, died. The settlers chose William Bradford Governor in his place. Building and farming was now progressing rapidly and the town began to take definite shape. It stood on rising ground only a short distance from the beach. Two streets crossed one another and where they met stood the Governor's house with an open common in front of it. Four cannon were placed in the common, one pointing down each of the four streets. A little above the town they built a big house, which was used as a church, as a public storehouse for provisions, and also as a fort. Here were more cannon, and here the settlers gathered with their matchlocks whenever there was an alarm of Indians. The settlers' dwelling-houses were simply big log huts, each standing in its own enclosed piece of ground. Round the whole settlement ran a heavy palisade, open in front towards the ocean, but guarded on the other three sides by gates. Beyond the palisade lay the farming land, divided into many small patches of corn fields. The whole village was like one big family, all equally concerned in the common lot.

The men of Plymouth were more fortunate in their dealings with the Indians than those of Virginia had been. At the very start they had won Massasoit, chief of the Pokanokets, to their side, and now they had a chance to strengthen that tie. Word came to Governor Bradford that the Indian chief was very ill and that his native doctors could do nothing for him. The Governor sent Edward Winslow to the chief, and he, knowing far more of medicine than the Indians did, was able to cure Massasoit in a short time. The chief was very grateful and vowed that if ever the men of Plymouth should need his aid he would come instantly with all his braves to help them. But other chiefs were not so friendly, and soon after Canonicus, chief of the Narragansetts, a tribe that was always warring with the Pokanokets, took offense at the alliance between his enemies and the white men. He sent a messenger to Governor Bradford, carrying a bundle of arrows wrapped in a rattlesnake's skin. An Indian who happened to be in Plymouth told the Governor that the message meant hostility on the part of the Narragansetts. The Governor threw away the bundle of arrows and sent the skin back filled with powder and balls. This threat from the settlers frightened Canonicus and he would not take the war-path against them. Realizing that they were not to be dismayed, he sent other messengers to treat with them, and arranged to trade with them in corn and furs.

So far Priscilla's life had been much like that of the other girls of Plymouth, patient, enduring, brave, but with few adventures except such as fell to the whole colony of Pilgrims. Now her life became more dramatic. The valiant, vigilant captain of the colony, Miles Standish, wanted her to be his wife.

Miles Standish was not by nature like the men who had crossed the sea with him to find a home. He was a soldier first and foremost, a man who had quarreled with his family in England and gone forth to seek his fortune with his sword. He had been in many battles, he had married, and at last, hearing of the Pilgrims' plans to sail for America he had decided to throw in his lot with theirs. They had made him their captain and he had proved himself a good one, and he had become one of the leading men, and one of the most popular in Plymouth. But the weather was too severe for his fair English wife Rose, and she had died soon after they landed. A year later he found that he had lost his adventurous soldier's heart to the pretty Priscilla Mullins.

Captain Standish knew that he was readier with sword and musket than with the words to win a young girl's love. He was much perplexed as to what he should do until he thought of his friend John Alden, who was quick of wit, and ready of tongue and pen, and who had before now written many a letter for the Captain. So he went to John Alden and begged him in the name of their friendship to call upon Mr. Mullins and ask him if he would give his daughter's hand to the Captain, and if he agreed then to plead his cause with Priscilla.

John and Priscilla had been brought up together and were close friends, and when the Captain made his request of John the youth discovered that he himself was in love with Priscilla. But he felt in honor bound to do what the Captain asked of him, and so, with a heavy heart he went to the Mullins house. Priscilla's father listened while John asked if Miles Standish might have his consent to marry his daughter, and at the end willingly agreed. Then John went to the room where the girl sat at her spinning-wheel, and even as he entered his foot faltered and he turned very pale. With his eyes bent on the floor and his voice hesitating he told her that he came from Captain Standish to ask if she would marry him. Priscilla was astonished; the Captain was older than she and had been so busy that she had seen little of him. John Alden had been her comrade and she cared more for him than she had ever dared admit to herself. He looked so pale and distressed as he stood there before her that she wondered what might be the cause. Then the reason flashed upon her. With downcast eyes and a voice that was only a whisper she spoke to him. "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?" was what he heard her say.

John wondered if he could have understood aright. Then she looked up at him and he knew that it was him she loved

and that she had no room for Standish in her heart. So, still trembling, he asked her to marry him instead of Standish, and she said she would. But even in his joy John feared that he had proved a traitor to his friend.

Dark days followed for the lovers. John had to give his message to the Captain, and it was no easy telling. For days he carried with him the feeling of treachery, and he spent many nights walking on the shore, distrustful of himself and of the love that had come to him in such fashion. Priscilla was scarcely happier, for the same thought was with her, and she knew it was she who had put the words into John Alden's mouth. Then came news that Captain Standish had been sent on an expedition against the Indians, and both Priscilla and John feared that in a moment of rashness over his disappointment he might expose himself recklessly in battle, and so the colony lose its best guardian and captain.

JOHN ALDEN AND PRISCILLA
*By Boughton*

But Miles Standish was no coward and he set out on his expedition determined to fight when he must but not to run into needless dangers. A three days' march brought him to the Indian encampment, but it seemed as peaceful as the town that he had left. Women were at work in the fields and about the tents, but there were no braves in sight. After a short détour he discovered them, their bodies covered with war paint, seated about a fire, handing a smoking pipe from one to another. One of them caught the glint of sun on the Captain's armor and spoke to the others, and then two rose and came towards Standish. They spoke peacefully, saying that they wanted to be friends with the white men, and would like to trade skins and corn for knives and muskets and the mysterious powder the white men used in their "fire-tubes." Standish offered them blankets but refused to give them arms or powder. Then their manner changed very quickly, and pointing to the knives at their belts they began to tell the white men what they would do to their settlement unless they would come to terms. In the meantime the wary Captain had noted how the other Indians had left the fire and were creeping up towards him on all sides, fixing arrows to their bowstrings as they came, but pretending that they were only going back to their tents. He waited, like a tiger ready to spring, while the chief worked himself up into a passion with his threats. Suddenly the chief drew his knife and raised it high, giving the war-cry. At the same instant Standish sprang forward, and before the Indian's knife could fall he had plunged his own into the redman's breast. The chief fell, and instantly a storm of arrows swept about Standish and his men and the braves leaped forward, crying their wild war-whoops. The white men turned back to back, and, leveling their muskets, sent a deadly fire at the advancing braves. The latter, always frightened at this mysterious sight and sound, turned and fled, leaving their chief, Wattawamat, dead in front of Standish. Then the Captain cut off the head of the Indian and carried it back with him to Plymouth, where it was stuck on a pike from the roof of the fort as a warning to other warring redmen. Such acts were part of the customs of those times, and the elders of Plymouth approved of the Captain's deed, but one elder, named John Robinson, who was the religious leader of them all, cried out as he passed the fort, "Oh, that he had converted some before he killed any!"

If Miles Standish had flared up in anger when John Alden first told him the result of his suit of Priscilla that anger dropped as quickly as it rose. The Captain had many other matters to think about, what with the constant fear of attack from restless Indians, and he was away from Plymouth almost as much as he was there. So the lovers lost the feeling that they had not been fair to him, and let it be known through Plymouth that they were to marry.

Meanwhile the Pilgrim village was prospering. Food was plentiful, for the first harvest had been good, and the hunters had brought in deer and the fishing-boats returned well-laden from the sea. Therefore the Governor ordered a day of thanksgiving late in the autumn, and when that day came the people went to the fortress-church on the hill and gave thanks to God that He had allowed them to endure and prosper in their new home. Later in the day they feasted, and never had Plymouth seen such a plentiful repast. Word of the feast had been sent to some of the neighboring Indians and ninety of them came and sat about the board with the white men. That was the beginning of our Thanksgiving Day.

John Alden was busy building a new house for his bride. He could build better now than the settlers had been able to do when they faced that first winter. He chose his ground with care, and built a substantial home, covering the roof with rushes, and filling the latticed windows with panes of oiled paper, which let the light come through but not the wind or rain. He dug a well and planted an orchard at the rear of the house, and when the place was finished it was one of the finest in Plymouth. In the spring Priscilla and John were married, their wedding being one of the earliest in the colony, and Priscilla being the first of the girls who had sailed on the *Mayflower* to change her name.

History does not tell us a great deal about this girl of the Pilgrims, but we do know how much courage and faith and constancy was required of the first settlers of New England. We picture Priscilla as the daughter of such people, devout, simple, and from force of the rude life about her growing more and more self-reliant from the day when Mary Chilton and she first set foot on Plymouth Rock. History does not tell us of Priscilla's wooing, but the romantic story has been so wonderfully put in poetry by Longfellow that when we hear Priscilla Alden mentioned we think first of all of "The Courtship of Miles Standish." It is a story which ought to be true, if it is not.

We know that Captain Standish and John Alden were friends at a later time, for when the Captain married his second wife he built his house over on Duxbury Hill, near where John Alden's stood, and his son married the daughter of John and Priscilla. So the blunt, brave Captain did not die of a broken heart.

Such is the story of this girl of the Pilgrims and of the brave days when the foundation stones of our land were being laid.

## IX

### Catherine the Great

### The Girl of Stettin: 1729-1796

"Come with me," whispered a small boy to a little girl who was standing, looking rather lonely, in one of the long corridors of a house in the North German town of Eutin.

"Come along," he added, still in a whisper, and tiptoed down the hall. The girl followed and saw him stop at a doorway and peep into the room beyond. Apparently satisfied he entered, and she, her curiosity roused, went into the room after him.

It was a bare apartment, with walls once white but now gray, small barred windows, a ceiling supported by rough timbers, and a wooden floor, uneven and uncarpeted. On a bench at one end stood a large round tub of water and from pegs in the wall hung caps and coats. It was the place where the few soldiers who were supposed to guard the house lounged when off duty, and used as a dressing-room. It was unoccupied now, and the boy, still on tiptoe, ran across the bare floor to the tub of water.

Pulling some paper from his pocket the boy tore it into many pieces and dropped three or four of them into the water. Then taking a stick that lay on a bench he began to poke the papers. The girl stood beside him. "See, Figchen," he whispered, "those are boats, sailing on the great Baltic Sea. This one's heavy laden, see how she rocks. That's her port over on the other side. Here comes a storm," and he stirred the water with his stick and sent the paper boats tossing to the rim.

"That's not much of a pond, Peter," said the girl disdainfully. "We've one in Stettin twice that big with live fish in it, and when we want to have a storm we throw a stone into it."

But the little boy was too busy with his boats to listen to her. He threw the rest of the papers into the tub and leaned so far over its edge that he could see his fat cheeks and blue eyes mirrored in it.

"Look, Figchen, look," he cried excitedly, "there's a whole war-fleet going over to the other side."

The girl, forgetting her disdain, bent over the rim and began to blow down at the water.

Before they knew it there were quick steps on the floor behind them and a man had seized Peter by the collar and jerked him back from the tub. "Didn't I tell you not to go near that water again?" the man demanded, his face and voice showing his anger. "What do you think you are? You're a soldier, and a soldier's first duty is to obey orders. For this you go to your room and do without dinner to-day."

The little boy stood with his back to the wall, looking much frightened. "Oh, Herr Brummer——" he began.

"Not a word," ordered the man. "You've heard what I've said."

The girl had looked on in amazement. Now she took a step forward. "You're a simpleton, Peter Ulric," she said. "Afraid of your tutor. Why don't you send him away?"

Herr Brummer turned as if he had noticed the girl for the first time. He bowed, smiling sarcastically. "Ach so; it is the Princess Sophia of Zerbst who speaks? And you would advise Prince Peter of Holstein to disobey his tutor?"

The girl's eyes met the man's defiantly. "I would," she answered. "At home, in Stettin——"

"Well, we're not in Stettin," broke in the man, turning back. "Go to your room, boy, and stay there till I come for you. And if I find you playing here again I'll make you kneel on dried peas till you can't stand up."

The boy, used to being treated in such fashion, went out of the guard-room, his face surly and white.

"As for you," said Herr Brummer to the girl, "the sooner you go home the better. You'll find Peter Ulric a dull playmate." With that he turned on his heel and followed the little Prince of Holstein, and heir to the thrones of Russia and Sweden, from the room.

Figchen, which was the nickname given to the Princess Sophia of Zerbst, waited a moment and then went out into the garden at the rear of the house. She was used to being left to her own devices, but in her home town she could go out into the city squares and play with other children, and here in Eutin she had been forbidden to leave the house and its garden. She wished she were at home again, and could not understand why her mother was so fond of traveling about to visit her relations. She thought this particular court of Holstein the dullest of them all, and little Peter Ulric the stupidest boy she had ever met. He was stupid, there was no doubt of that, but no one had ever cared enough about him to try and make him more intelligent.

Children of rank had a dull time at the courts of the little German duchies in those days. The Princess Figchen was better off than Peter Ulric because she was a girl and did not have to be moulded into a soldier, but she had little enough fun. Her father was very fond of her, but he was a general in the army of Frederick the Great of Prussia, and away from home most of the time. Her mother was vain and capricious. The family were poor and only used the left wing of their palace at Stettin. Here Figchen had three rooms, and her bedroom was close to the bell-tower of the

church, so that she was wakened early every morning by a deafening peal of bells. She played in the streets with the town children, none of whom called her "Your Highness," and the children's mothers treated her just like any other little girl.

Most of her time, however, she spent with her governess and teachers. French was the fashion then and children were taught the language, the manners, and the gallantry of Paris. The Princess was bright but wilful, if she was interested she would learn quickly, if she was not the teachers might storm and she would only laugh at them. Her governess told her that her chin was too sharp, and that by sticking it out she was always knocking against everybody she came across. Figchen laughed and stuck her chin farther out. But in her own way she was fond of her French governess and read a good many French books with her.

Even though Figchen did like the girls of her own town better than those she met elsewhere, her mother, who was restless and eager for excitement, found Stettin very dull, and was continually traveling. She had relatives in all the little German cities, and liked to visit them at Hamburg, Brunswick, or Berlin, and hear the latest gossip. So Figchen met most of the Grand Dukes and Duchesses of her time, and was presented at Berlin to the powerful young Frederick the Great, who was just beginning his remarkable career. This visiting also gave her mother a chance to see the young Princes who might be eligible for her daughter's hand, for it was the first concern of a young German Princess to find a husband who would some day wear a crown. But Figchen herself was not interested in these boys with long titles to their names. Most of them seemed very stupid to her, much like Peter Ulric of Holstein, taught to be a soldier instead of being taught to be a gentleman.

Then, suddenly, when this little Princess of Zerbst was twelve years old, strange events occurred in Europe. To the northwest of her home lay the mighty country of Russia, still almost savage, but of enormous size and of unknown strength. Only a short time before Peter the Great had been Czar of Russia and had built up a great Empire that overshadowed the little German duchies that lay along its borders. One of Peter's daughters had married the Duke of Holstein, and been the mother of the small Peter Ulric. Another was the Princess Elizabeth, who had not married. Peter the Czar had a half-brother Ivan, and Ivan's granddaughter was ruling as regent in Russia for her little son named Ivan. Then on December 9, 1741, the Princess Elizabeth, filled with her great father's ambition, suddenly seized the throne, and threw the regent and the little Czar Ivan into prison. The child's reign ended, and the unscrupulous woman took the crown as the Empress Elizabeth. She was strong and could hold it and that was all that counted in Russia then. The Empress looked about for an heir and her eyes lighted on Peter Ulric, the son of her sister. The regent in prison had always called him "the little devil," because she was afraid he might some day set aside her own Ivan. "The little devil" disappeared from his home and reappeared at St. Petersburg, and all the world learned that Elizabeth had proclaimed him the Grand Duke Peter, her adopted son and heir to the crown she wore. Figchen heard the news and wondered how such a stupid boy could ever be Czar of Russia.

The Empress Elizabeth, like a fairy godmother, waved her wand again, and this time it rested on Figchen herself. The Empress ordered the little girl's portrait sent to her, despatched presents to her and to her father and mother, and finally invited the Princess of Zerbst to visit her in Moscow and to bring her daughter with her. The ambitious mother knew what that meant. The Empress meant to marry Figchen to the Grand Duke Peter. That was a more dazzling destiny than she had ever dreamed of.

Mother and daughter started out for Moscow. They were poor and did not need many boxes to carry their wardrobe. Traveling was hard, and, it being January, the cold was so bitter they had to wear masks to protect their faces. There were no hotels and they had to stay at posting-houses, poor shacks where the landlord's family and his animals often slept under the same roof. There was no snow but the four carriages in which the Princess and her suite traveled were so heavy they required twenty-four horses to pull them. Sledges were fastened to the backs of the carriages to be used later, and these made their progress slower.

But when they crossed the frontier to Russia everything changed. Troops met them, with flags flying and drums beating. Gallant officers joined them and paid them compliments. Castles opened to them and the ladies, shining with diamonds and silks, quite overwhelmed the simple German Princess and her daughter. When they reached St. Petersburg ladies of the court were ready to stock their wardrobes with magnificent toilettes. The travelers were glad of that, for they knew their own clothes would look shabby enough in the presence of an Empress who was said to have 15,000 silk dresses and no less than 5,000 pairs of shoes.

When they left St. Petersburg on their way to Moscow the Princess and Figchen traveled in a magnificent sleigh, built like a great couch with curtains of scarlet and gold, and lined inside with sable. The ladies reclined on what was really a feather bed, with coverings of satin and fur, and supported on springs so that the sleigh could pass over the roughest road without disturbing the passengers inside. Here they lay and looked out through the windows at the snowy barren country all about them. Figchen was impressed. Used as she was to the simplicity of the little German duchy, she could not help wondering at so much extravagance and luxury, or thrilling at the sight of the great Cossack soldiers and the Imperial grenadiers who rode as her escort. So she began to realize the might of this great northern country.

The Empress Elizabeth welcomed them warmly at her palace in Moscow, and at once Figchen found herself surrounded by fawning courtiers, ambitious women, and all the pomp and ceremony of a court. Generals and statesmen struggled to kiss her hand, ladies to compliment her on her complexion, for they all knew now that the little German maiden was to marry their Grand Duke Peter. She knew it now also, but although she remembered how stupid and timid he had seemed at Eutin, she made no objection, because her eyes were dazzled with the wonders of this new life.

Peter Ulric had not improved since Figchen had last seen him. Herr Brummer's iron hand no longer held him in check, and he had run absolutely wild. His health was ruined, he was dissipated beyond belief, cowardly, and as

ignorant as his poorest soldier. He kissed Figchen's hand, and said he was glad to see her, and then left her, to drink himself stupid with vodka. The marriage promised to be about as tragic as it well could be. But Figchen had more interesting things to think about than Peter Ulric. She had to study a new religion, so that she might enter the Russian Church, she had to have prepared a great trousseau, and she had to try and learn in a short time some of the things she had refused to learn at Stettin. Then she fell ill, and was sick for days, while her mother and the Russian doctors struggled as to the best way to cure her. The doctors advised blood-letting but the Princess was very much opposed to it. They agreed to refer the matter to the Empress, and found that she had gone on a five days' visit to a distant convent where she had shut herself up in one of her strange spasms of religion. Finally she appeared and ordered the blood-letting. Poor Figchen suffered, but recovered. When she regained consciousness she found herself in the arms of the Empress, and in her hand a gift of a diamond necklace and a pair of earrings worth 20,000 roubles. Figchen began to realize that the Empress Elizabeth was a very singular person.

As soon as she was well again she finished making ready to enter the Russian Church, and in June, 1744, when she was fifteen, she made her new vows. She was a handsome girl, and her youth, beauty, and modest manner made a charming picture as she entered the imperial chapel. She wore what was called an "Adrienne" robe of red cloth of Tours, laced with cords of silver, and about her unpowdered hair was bound a simple white fillet. Her voice did not tremble and she did not forget a word of the long Russian creed. Then the new name of Catherine was added to her other names and it was announced that henceforth that would be her official title. The next day she was betrothed to Peter Ulric.

Peter's health was so bad that the wedding had to be put off from one date to another, but finally, in August, 1745, when Peter was seventeen, and Catherine sixteen, they were married with the greatest pomp and ceremony. Figchen became a Grand Duchess and wife to the next Czar of Russia, and her mother went home to Stettin and left the girl, surrounded by her own court, to fight her own battles.

No one had ever cared very much for Figchen, her father and mother had let her grow up as she would, and the only thing that was asked of her was that she should marry the prince they might pick out for her. That was her idea of duty, and that she had done. She had seen very little kindness, or consideration for others, or happy home life in any of the German courts where she spent her childhood. She had seen men trained to be soldiers and gamblers and drunkards, and women who were vain and spiteful and ambitious. In Russia she found things even worse than they had been at home. The Empress was a tyrant who had put the rightful Czar, a little boy, and his mother, in a distant prison, and planned to keep them there all their lives. Figchen's husband cared nothing for her, and soon appeared to have forgotten that she existed. If she had disliked him when he was a boy she despised him now that he was a young man. All around her were conspirators, and slanderers, and spies. There seemed only one thing left to her, ambition, tremendous ambition, such as had made Peter the Great and Elizabeth mighty conquerors and rulers of Russia. So, cut off from all other dreams, Catherine began to dream of that, and, as time went on, she made plans for the future.

Strange to say, although Figchen had always seemed a very quiet, docile girl, Catherine proved a very strong, determined woman. She kept her eye on what was happening in Russia, and she laid her plans. Peter had showed he cared nothing for her, and she cared nothing for him. More than that she knew that he would make the worst possible Emperor of Russia, and she thought she knew some one who would grace the throne much better.

The Empress Elizabeth died at a time when the Grand Duke Peter was away from the capital. He heard the news and started for St. Petersburg, but had not gone far when couriers brought him tidings that Catherine had seized the throne, proclaimed herself Czarina, and meant to rule alone. So she had. Dressed in the uniform of a general she had appeared before the troops, and announced that she was their new commander. Those rough soldiers knew that she was strong and that Peter was weak, and they put the care of their country in her hands. So the Empress Catherine II succeeded the Empress Elizabeth.

Catherine the Great
*From a painting by Rosselin*

Peter, amazed, indignant, terrified, had no more chance now than he had had in the guard-room when Herr Brummer found him sailing boats. He was only a pawn. But as long as he lived he might make trouble. Therefore one night conspirators seized him and assassinated him, just as had often been done to Russian rulers before. History does not say if Catherine knew of the conspiracy in advance, but does say that she shed few tears over his fate.

Events proved that Catherine knew her strength. She became one of the great sovereigns of Europe, a far-seeing statesman, a brilliant commander of her armies. She was relentless, but she was fearless as well, and a century which had given the title of Great to Peter the First, and to the warrior Frederick of Prussia, paid the same tribute to her. She had only been taught the value of power in her girlhood, and that was all she came to care for later. The wonder of it is that the little Figchen who used to play with the town children in the streets of Stettin should have become the masterful Catherine the Great.

## X

### Fanny Burney

### The Girl of London: 1752-1840

A girl sat at a desk in a small third-story room of Dr. Charles Burney's house in London, writing as rapidly as her quill-pen could travel over the paper. It was a December afternoon, and the light was not very bright, so that she had to lean far forward until the end of her nose almost touched the tip of her pen. Now and then a smile would cross her lips or she would stop a moment to reread a sentence or two and nod her head, but for the most part she kept steadily on, very much in earnest in what she was doing. On one corner of the desk lay a pile of finished manuscript, showing that she must have been at this work for many days. As a matter of fact she had come up to this small spare room every afternoon for a month and written until it was too dark for her to see.

Presently another girl came tiptoeing up the stairs, paused a moment at the door, and then stole quietly into the room. Without a word she crossed over to an old sofa on the other side of the room, and sat down upon it. The writer went on driving her quill-pen across the paper. Some five minutes later the quill stuck and sent a shower of ink-blots in all directions. "There, my pen's stubbed its toe again," said the writer, sitting up straight. "I'd better let it rest itself a while."

"Oh, Fanny," exclaimed the girl on the sofa, "do tell me what's happening to dear Caroline Evelyn now."

The authoress laid down her pen and tilted back in her chair. "The funniest things have been happening to her lately, Susan. I laughed until I cried. A young man named Lord Farringfield fell in love with her. He was very good-looking, with light curly hair, and she thought she liked him very much. He made her an offer of marriage in her father's garden, when suddenly a wind came up and blew off his wig. He looked so funny without any hair that all she could think of to say was to offer him her handkerchief to cover his head, and that put him out so that he jumped up from his knees and stalked away. Later the gardener found the wig on the bough of an apple tree, but Caroline didn't dare send it to its owner and kept it on a little stand in her room to remind her of her first offer of marriage. Let me read it to you."

"Oh, do, Fanny," urged the younger sister.

The writer delved into the pile of papers and pulled out several. Then, with a preliminary chuckle, she began to read. At first she went smoothly enough, but after a while she began to laugh, and finally she had to stop and dry her eyes with a handkerchief. "He did look so ridiculous," she said. "Can't you see him there, saying, 'Oh, my adorable Caroline, wilt thou——' when whist! he claps his hands to his head, but his beautiful curls have gone?"

"Indeed I can," replied Susan, who was hugging herself and rocking on the sofa with appreciation. "However can you do it, Fanny? It seems to me each person in the story is funnier than the last."

"They don't start out funny," said the writer, "but after they've talked a little or walked about they begin to do funny things. Of course the hero and Caroline herself are quite serious. It's getting to be a big book. Just look." She opened a drawer of the desk and produced another pile of papers and laid them on top of those already on the table. "It's almost a full-sized novel now."

"It's beautiful," said Susan. "I don't know any book that's ever made me laugh and cry so much."

"Do you really think it's good?" Fanny turned about so as to face her sister. "I'll tell you something, Susan. I just had to write it. I couldn't help doing it, no matter how hard I tried."

"It's wonderful," continued the admiring Susan.

"But you mustn't tell. You must never tell," besought Fanny. "I'd be so ashamed of myself, and just think what father might have to say to me about it!" She swung about to the desk and rested her head in her hands as though to contemplate the overwhelming things Dr. Burney might be called upon to say should he discover her offense. Then impulsively she stretched out her hands and clasped the manuscript. "Oh, I love it, I love every line I've written there."

Some one else had been climbing the flight of stairs to the third story, and now came into the room. It was Mrs. Burney, the stepmother of Fanny and Susan. She went over to the desk and looked at the pile of written sheets before Fanny could turn them over or hide them in the drawer. "So this is what you've been about, is it?" said she, not unkindly, but rather in an amused tone. "I've wondered where you went when you stole away from the rest of the family every afternoon. Your father said you wanted to study, but I told him I didn't approve of young ladies creeping out of sight to pore over books. So you've been writing a story surreptitiously? Take my word for it, Fanny, writing books has gone out of fashion."

"I know it," said Fanny, "but I couldn't help it. I'd much rather do this than practice on the harpsichord."

"But music is a polite accomplishment, my dear, whereas scribbling is quite the reverse."

"Fanny's isn't scribbling," protested Susan. "It's wonderful. It really is, mother. It's as good as anything down-stairs

in father's library. Let her read some of it to you."

"No, thank you, Susan. I can understand some parents letting their children run wild and become novel-writers, but not Dr. Burney. You must remember you have a position in society to think about, my dears."

"I know," agreed Fanny guiltily.

"What would the world say," continued Mrs. Burney, "if it should learn that Dr. Burney's daughter Frances had composed a novel!"

"Father writes books," suggested Susan.

"Yes, but on the subject of music. It's quite another thing to compose a treatise showing learning. Fanny's writings, if I mistake not, are merely idle inventions, the stories of events that never happened to people who never lived."

"Yes, they are," agreed the ashamed Fanny. "I make them up out of my head as I go along."

"But they're quite as interesting as the things that do happen to real people," argued the devoted Susan. "More interesting, I think. I don't know any real person who interests me as much as Caroline in Fanny's story."

Mrs. Burney smiled. She had no wish to be harsh, but she had very decided ideas as to what was and what was not proper for young ladies to do. She was a bustling, sociable person, and she considered that Fanny was altogether too shy and reserved. She wanted to make her more like her other sisters, Esther and Charlotte, both of whom were very popular with the many visitors who came to see the celebrated Dr. Burney.

"It's for your own good," she said finally. "I shan't tell your father, but I know he wouldn't approve of your spending your time in this way."

"I know," said Fanny slowly. "I know what people think of a young woman who writes. I oughtn't to do it, but the temptation was too strong for me. I'll give it up, mother, and not steal off here by myself. I'll try to be more the way you and father want me."

"That's the right spirit, Fanny. You know we're all very proud of you anyway." Stooping down Mrs. Burney kissed her stepdaughter, and then left the sisters alone.

For some time there was silence while Fanny stared at the big pile of closely written sheets which lay in front of her and Susan looked at her sister. Then with a sigh the older girl rose and gathered the papers in her arms. "Mother is right. It is wrong of me," said she. "Would you mind, Susan, coming down into the yard with me?"

"What are you going to do, Fanny?" asked her sister in alarm.

"I've made up my mind what's best to be done, and I'm going to do it. Come down-stairs, please."

Fanny led the way with the papers, and Susan came after her. They went down the three flights, through a hall, and out into a paved court at the rear of the house.

"Will you watch them a minute, please?" said Fanny, as she laid the papers on the bricks.

She went indoors and soon was back again, with some sticks of wood, some straw, and a lighted taper in her hand. She laid the sticks together, stuffed some straw in among them, and then placed the pile of papers on top.

"Oh, Fanny," cried her sister, "you're not going to burn up all the story? Oh, poor Caroline! Don't do it, Fanny; think how long it took to write it and how good it is!"

"I must," said Fanny, very decidedly.

"Oh, please, please don't! It's almost like murder. It's a shame, Fanny, it is, it's a terrible shame!"

"It hurts me most," said Fanny, "but it's the only way to settle Caroline once for all." With a very grim face she held the taper to the straw until it caught fire. In a moment a page of the manuscript was curling up in flames.

"Oh, Fanny, Fanny!" cried Susan, tears coming to her eyes. She looked beseechingly at her sister, but the latter's purpose was inflexible. A few minutes more and the papers were all burning brightly.

The two girls stood there until the fire had burnt itself out, and then turned to each other. Tears stood in Fanny's eyes and also in those of the sympathetic Susan. "Poor Caroline Evelyn," sighed Fanny, "I'm going to be ever and ever so lonely without her."

Susan slipped her arm about her sister's waist, and they went indoors to get ready for supper. The young authoress was very quiet when the family met at table a little later, and had very little appetite, but the family were quite used to Fanny's reserve, and none of them thought anything about it except the faithful Susan, who threw tender reproachful glances across the table at Fanny from time to time.

The father of these girls, Dr. Charles Burney, was the fashionable music-master of the day in London. He had made a great success, and had so many pupils that he had to begin his round of lessons as early as seven o'clock in the morning, and often was not through with them until eleven at night. Many a time he dined in a hackney coach on sandwiches and a glass of sherry and water as he drove from one house to another. Among his friends were all sorts of people, musicians, actors, scholars, famous beaux and belles, and as he was most hospitable his children grew up familiar with many different types of men and women of the great world of London. The other girls and the boys were like their father in taking part in all the entertainments that went on, but Fanny, the second daughter, although

she was admitted to be very bright, was unusually quiet and retiring. Her teacher called her "the silent, observant Miss Fanny," and that described her well, because she was always watching the people about her, and remembering their peculiar tricks of manner and speech.

But she had a mind of her own and could speak up on occasion. When she was ten years old her father lived in a house on Poland Street, next door to a wig-maker, who supplied perukes to the judges and lawyers of London. The children of the wig-maker and the Burney children played together in a little garden behind the former's house, and one day they went into the wig-maker's house, and each put on one of the fine wigs he had for sale. Then they began to play in the garden until one of the perukes, which was very fine and worth over ten guineas, fell into a tub of water and lost all its curl. The wig-maker came out, fished out the peruke, and declared it was entirely ruined. With that he spoke very angrily to his children, when suddenly the quiet Fanny stepped forth, and with the manner of an old lady said, "What is the use of talking so much about an accident? The wig is wet, to be sure, and it was a very good wig, but words will do no good, because, sir, what's done can't be undone." The wig-maker listened in great surprise, and then made Fanny a little bow. "Miss Burney speaks with the wisdom of ages," he said, and without another word went into the house.

Among all their father's friends the Burney children thought there was no one quite so amusing as the great actor David Garrick. He would drop in at all hours of the day, and always playing some new part. Sometimes he would sit still and listen to Dr. Burney talk on the history of music, and gradually his face and manner would change until the children could scarcely believe he was the same man who had entered the room a short time before. He would seem to become an old crafty man before their very eyes, or a villain from the slums of London, or a Spanish grandee for the first time in England. Sometimes he would appear at the house in disguise and give a new name to the maid and appear in the dining-room as a stranger to the family. Once he arrived at the door in an old, ill-fitting wig and shabby clothes and the servant refused to admit him, taking him for a beggar. "Egad, child," he said to the maid, "you don't guess whom you have the happiness to see! Do you know that I am one of the first geniuses of the age? You would faint away upon the spot if you could only imagine who I am!" The maid, very much startled, let him pass, and he shambled into the house, again pretending to be a beggar. The children were always delighted to have him come, and Fanny in particular, because she had a talent for mimicking people herself, and she liked to study him. He often sent them tickets to see him act at Drury Lane Theatre, and there they saw their friend play the greatest rôles of the English stage as no actor had ever played them before.

Fanny's particular friend was a Mr. Samuel Crisp, a curious man who had once been very popular in London, but had retired to a lonely life in the country at a place called Chesington Hall. He was very fond of the Burneys and often had them visit him at his country home. Fanny called him "her dearest daddy," and loved to walk across the meadows with him, and tell him of the curious people she had met at her father's house in town. He understood her better than any one else, and it was to him that she confided the story of how she had burned the manuscript of her novel. "It was very hard, Daddy," she said. "I know I oughtn't to want to keep on scribbling, but somehow I can't help it. I think of so many things, and I want to make them real, and the only way is to put them down on paper. People tell me young ladies shouldn't be writing stories, that it's not genteel, but how can I help myself?"

"You can tell them to me, Fanny, and no one shall ever know you made them up."

So she unburdened her heart to him, told him of her friend Caroline Evelyn, the dear child of her brain, of the suitors that young lady had, and how she treated them, and of her elopement to Gretna Green, and of the funny people she was continually meeting. Mr. Crisp listened and smiled, surprised at the girl's powers of description and humor. Finally he said to her, "It seems to me, Fanny, that young lady's career is more interesting to you than your own."

"So it is," she answered. "I think more about her than about any one else."

"Then," said Mr. Crisp, "in spite of your mother's good advice and your own judgment I predict that Caroline rises in time from the flames."

"Do you think so, Daddy? Oh, if she only might! It's well there's no paper and ink here or I'd begin her over again right on the spot."

Mr. Crisp was right in his prediction. That summer the Burneys went to the little town of King's Lynn, where Fanny had been born. There Fanny shut herself up in a summer-house which was called "The Cabin," and began to rewrite her book. She seized upon every scrap of white paper that she could find and bore it off with her. She worked secretly, inventing numberless excuses for the hours she spent by herself. Gradually the story took shape again, changed in many ways from its first telling, and with the heroine rechristened Evelina.

Meantime Dr. Burney had started to prepare his great History of Music, and asked the help of his daughters to copy it for him. Fanny wrote the best hand and was the most reliable, so her father made her his chief secretary, and day after day she worked with him, having to postpone her own book from week to week. But each time she came back to it more ardently and each time her pen flew faster as she sat at her table in the little summer-house. At last she told Susan about it, and Susan was delighted, and when Fanny read some of it to her she declared that it was a thousand times better than the story of Caroline had been.

When her father's History of Music appeared in print it made a great success, and this stirred the youthful Fanny with the desire to see what London would think of "Evelina." She was determined, however, to keep its authorship unknown, and so she carefully recopied the manuscript in an assumed handwriting in order that no publisher or printer who had seen her handwriting in any of the manuscripts she had copied for her father should recognize the same hand in this. But "Evelina" had grown to be a very long novel, and by the time she had copied out two volumes of it she grew tired, and so she wrote a letter, without any signature, to a publisher, offering to send him the completed part of her novel at once, and the rest of it during the next year. This publisher replied that he would not

consider the book unless he were told the author's name. Fanny showed the letter to Susan, and they talked it over, but decided that she ought not to send her name. She then wrote to another publisher, making the same offer as she had made to the first. He said he would like to see the manuscript. Thereupon Fanny decided to take her brother Charles into the secret and have him carry the work to the publisher. Charles agreed, and Fanny and Susan muffled him up in a greatcoat so that he looked much older than he was, and sent him off. He was not recognized, and when he called later for an answer he was told that the publisher was pleased with the book, but could not agree to print it until he should receive the whole story. That discouraged Fanny, and she let the book lie by for some time, but finally plucked up courage, and copied out the third volume.

In the meantime Fanny began to wonder if it would be fair for her to publish a novel without telling her father, and she decided she ought to go to him. She caught him just as he was leaving home on a trip, and said, with many blushes and much confusion, that she had written a little story and wanted to have it printed without giving her name. She added that she would not bother him with the manuscript in any way and begged that he wouldn't ask to see it. The Doctor was very much amused as well as surprised, and he told her to go ahead and see what would come of the story.

Better satisfied now that she had her father's consent Fanny sent the third volume to the publisher, who accepted the book and paid her twenty pounds for it.

Fanny Burney

At length "Evelina" was published. The first Fanny knew of it was when her stepmother opened a paper one morning at the breakfast table and read aloud an advertisement announcing the appearance of a new novel entitled "Evelina; or, A Young Lady's Entrance into the World." Susan smiled across the table at Fanny, and Charles winked at her, but she sat very still, her cheeks a fiery red. They did not give her secret away to the rest of the family, nor mention who the author was to any of their friends. Shortly afterward Fanny was ill and went out to Chesington to recuperate. She took the three volumes of "Evelina" with her, and read them aloud to Mr. Crisp, who pretended that he had no idea who the author might be and listened with the most flattering interest to chapter after chapter. "It reminds me of something," he said one day.

"And what may that be, dear Daddy?" she asked.

"I can't think, but it's prodigiously finer than what I'm trying to recall," he answered.

By the time she returned home all London was talking about the new novel and wondering as to the author. Wherever Dr. Burney went he found people discussing the same subject. The great Dr. Samuel Johnson declared that it was uncommonly fine, and the Doctor was the accepted judge of all literary matters. Like all the others he was sure that the writer was a man, and made many guesses as to which of the lights of London it might be, but although one man after another was credited with the honor of having written it each had to decline the satisfaction. Sir Joshua Reynolds declared he would give fifty pounds to know the author and meant to find him, and Sheridan vowed he must get the clever man, whoever he was, to write him a play.

In the meantime Fanny and Susan were enjoying the mystery tremendously. It was very delightful to hear all the visitors at their house talking of "Evelina" without the faintest notion that the author was sitting there listening to all they had to say. But the time came when Dr. Burney learned the secret, and his pride in Fanny's accomplishment could not keep him silent. He told the story to several of his friends and they, very much amazed, passed it on to others. Then Mrs. Thrale, a friend of the Burneys, gave a dinner, and told her guests that they should have the

pleasure of meeting the author of "Evelina" there. When they came they were presented to the shy, quiet young woman whom they had often seen at Dr. Burney's house. She was overwhelmed with congratulations, and when the party came to an end Sir Joshua Reynolds, with a most courtly bow, bent over her hand, and hoped that he might shortly have the pleasure of entertaining her at his home in Leicester Square. When she went home Fanny said to Susan, "The joke of it is that the people spoke as if they were afraid of me, instead of my being very much afraid of them."

"Evelina" made Fanny Burney famous. She became a well-known figure in London life, and wrote other novels, "Cecilia, "Camilla," and "The Wanderer." She wrote a life of Dr. Burney, and she kept many diaries, all of which were filled with witty and humorous descriptions of the people of her age. In time she was appointed a Lady in Waiting to Queen Charlotte, wife of George III, and took a prominent part at court. Later she married the French Chevalier D'Arblay, and went with him to France, where she had many exciting adventures during the Reign of Terror. She afterward described these adventures in her diary and it gives a most interesting account of those thrilling times.

So it was that "the silent, observant Miss Fanny" became one of the great figures of England at the close of the eighteenth century, and it was the fact that she could not give up her love of writing and had to tell the story of her heroine Evelina that first brought her to the notice of the world and made her famous.

Transcriber's Note:

Minor typographical errors have been corrected without note.

Irregularities and inconsistencies in the text have been retained as printed.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK HISTORIC GIRLHOODS, PART ONE ***

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