

THE CAPTIVITY AND RESTORATION OF MRS. MARY ROWLANDSON

Adapted by John Hall Dorr

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"On the tenth of February, 1675, came the Indians with great numbers upon Lancaster." So begins Mrs. Rowlandson's narrative.

It is sunrise on a cold winter's morning, and Mrs. Rowlandson is awakened by the distant noise of gunshots. She looks out from the wooden garrison house where she and her 3 children and 3 other families have barricaded themselves against the threat of hostile Indian attack. In the distance, she sees the smoke of several other houses of the frontier town of Lancaster - on fire.

Mrs. Rowlandson's husband, the town minister, and many of the other men of the town are away in Boston pleading for help in defending their town. This attack was not so soon expected.

The Indians are quickly upon the Rowlandson garrison, showering the house with gunfire. The few men defending the house are wounded one after another. As the Indians try to break in the windows, the women shoot wildly at them. One woman throws a pot of burning coals in an Indian's face. The Indians take hay from the barn and set fire to the house.

Forced to flee the burning house, Mrs. Rowlandson tries to run out the door with her 3 children: Joseph, age 14; Mary, age 10; and Sarah, age 6. The Indians' bullets rain into them. A bullet strikes Mrs. Rowlandson in the side, the same bullet wounding Sarah, whom Mrs. Rowlandson holds in her arms.

Mrs. Rowlandson stands bleeding, in shock, as all around her, her family and loved ones are struck down. The Indians quickly fall upon the wounded, bashing their heads in with hatchets, then stripping the dead naked, whooping and hollering in scornful derision of their victims.

The Indians grab Mrs. Rowlandson, telling her that if she will come with them, they will not harm her. She acquiesces, holding the wounded Sarah to her side. Her two older children are pulled away by other Indians.

As she is led from the town, all around her rage the atrocities of the Indian victory. Naked bodies litter the ground - maimed, headless, in pools of blood, bright red drenched into the white snow. The Indians plunder the burning houses. Two young warriors dance tauntingly around Mrs. Rowlandson playing catch with a decapitated head. In shock, she follows where she is led.

The leader of the raid, a crazed warrior called One-Eyed John Monoco (because one of his eyes has been gouged out), screams his victory at Mrs. Rowlandson, bragging in broken English how the settlers have brought this upon themselves by mistreating the Indians and stealing their land. He taunts her about praying to her English God, as he has just burnt down their church. He boasts about how he will burn other English towns, even including Boston. "What me will, me do," he brags. Strung around his neck is a necklace of fingers cut from English bodies.

That night, the raiding party camps on a nearby hill. Around great bonfires, the Indians dance and sing and yell their triumph, feasting on the cattle, sheep, pigs and chicken plundered from the town. Mrs. Rowlandson huddles with her moaning daughter Sarah. When she asks One-Eyed John Monoco if she can't lie down in a nearby abandoned English house, Monoco mocks her saying: "What, will you love Englishmen still?" He further taunts her by telling her that they will ambush her husband when he comes back to Lancaster.

The next day, the Indians begin travelling back into the woods. They put the wounded Sarah on a horse, where she moans that she's dying. Mrs. Rowlandson, travelling along behind on foot, takes her daughter from the horse and carries her a ways in her arms, trying to console her. The Indians put both Mrs. Rowlandson (herself in pain from her side wound) and Sarah back on the horse. Going down a steep hill, they fall over the horses head to the ground. The Indians laugh merrily at their plight. It begins to snow, and the Indians make camp. Mrs. Rowlandson spends the night sitting on a few branches in front of a small fire, her child in her lap running a high fever and calling for water.

The next day, riding on horseback behind One-Eyed John Monoco, they arrive at an Indian village of wigwams called Wenimesset, situated on a swamp. Monoco negotiates with another Indian, Quanopen (of the more civilized coastal Narragansett tribe) and trades Mrs. Rowlandson to him for a gun. As she sits waiting, an Englishman named Robert Pepper, long a captive, approaches her. They trade stories of their captures. Pepper shows her how by applying oak leaves to her wound it can be cured.

Quanopen, her new master, is a man of high breeding among his people, one of 4 war chiefs. He is considerably kinder to Mrs. Rowlandson than the more primitive Monoco. Quanopen takes her and her child to the large wigwam where he is living with one of his three wives, Weetamoo, their extended family and several of Weetamoo's followers.

Weetamoo is the hereditary queen of the Pocasset Wampanoags, another coastal tribe recently driven inland by the hostilities of the English. Even in exile, she is haughty and regal in bearing, of great exotic beauty. She spends hours a day decorating her face and body. Weetamoo harbors a great hatred for the English, her previous husband having been poisoned by them; and she hardly deigns to recognize Mrs. Rowlandson's presence, treating her rather as a servant, or less.

Sarah, dying, lies in her mother's lap, moaning night and day. Finally, Weetamoo complains to her husband, and Mrs. Rowlandson is sent from the wigwam to sit outside. The child dies in her mother's arms. The Indians take Sarah's body from her mother and bury it on a hill, sending Mrs. Rowlandson back to Weetamoo's wigwam.

Learning that her other daughter Mary is being held captive in the same village, Mrs. Rowlandson tries to go see her. But the child, at the sight of her mother, breaks down into hysterical crying, and the Indians drag her away, not letting them speak.

However, her son Joseph, being held in another encampment some 6 miles away, is brought to visit Mrs. Rowlandson when an expedition of Indians set out for another raid - on the town of Medford. The squaw who now owns Joseph brings him to his mother for a brief reunion. Joseph tells her that he is alright and she should not worry about him.

When the Indians return from the raid on Medford, there is another big celebration and trading of Englishmen's scalps. Quanopen gives Mrs. Rowlandson a Bible that is part of his plunder - much to Weetamoo's resentment. Throughout the rest of her capture,

Mrs. Rowlandson finds much solace in opening the Bible to random passages that seem to comment upon her lot and give her strength. (We hear these passages in the V.O. narration). She keeps the Bible at all times in the pouch of her apron and uses it as her pillow at night.

The Indians start packing up their things to abandon the village - to avoid English troops that may be pursuing them. In the confusion, Mrs. Rowlandson takes the opportunity to talk with the 9 other English captives in the village - 8 children and one woman, Goodwife Joslin, a full 9-months pregnant, with another 2 year old in her arms. Mrs. Joslin is in near hysteria, desiring to escape. Mrs. Rowlandson reads her a passage from the Bible: "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait I say on the Lord." It is Mrs. Rowlandson's role, as wife of a minister, to try to be a strength to the others.

Mrs. Rowlandson looks sadly back as she departs the village in a small party of Indians including her keepers, Quanopen and Weetamoo, the other English prisoners going off in other direction with other parties. After a half day's travel, they make camp in a desolate wilderness area, cold and wet and snowy and hungry, with only the cold ground to sit on. Her head light and dizzy from hunger and exposure, the wilderness seems to revolve hypnotically around Mrs. Rowlandson. She finds the following passage in her Bible: "Thus saith the Lord: refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, and they shall come again from the land of the enemy."

Because of her skills at knitting, the Indians put Mrs. Rowlandson to work knitting garments for them - namely a pair of white cotton stockings for the vain Weetamoo. When Mrs. Rowlandson balks at working on Sunday, her Sabbath, Weetamoo threatens to "break her face," so Mrs. Rowlandson goes back to work.

Again the Indians pack all their luggage and move on, this time so hurriedly that Mrs. Rowlandson suspects, correctly, that the English militia must be hot on their trail. The strongest men among the Indians stay behind, presumably to delay the English, while the old, the women, and the children escape, lugging all their belongings. Those who are too old or too sick are carried on the backs of others. Mrs. Rowlandson, because of her wound, is required to carry only her knitting and two bags of corn meal.

Arriving at a wide river, the Indians set about cutting dry trees to make rafts for the fording. The crossing is a long, slow, risky process, but Mrs. Rowlandson makes it across without even getting wet, whereas some of the Indians are knee-deep in the freezing water. They set up their wigwams and camp on the other side of the river while the process of the crossings continues.

In the morning, a panic runs through the village (Mrs. Rowlandson is never told what is happening). The Indians set fire to their wigwams and abandon the riverside camp - for the English militia have arrived at the other side of the river. They fire a few rounds after the fleeing Indians, but the river is too wide and they cannot cross it to pursue.

The trek continues, Mrs. Rowlandson struggling up steep hills, across icy brooks, scrounging for ears of corn and grains of wheat in abandoned English fields. Weak from her meager subsistence, everything is as in a slow-motion dream to her.

At the next encampment, Mrs. Rowlandson spots an Indian with a basket of rancid meat and asks for a piece. "What, can you eat horse liver?" asks the surprised Indian. She replies that she will try if he will give her a piece. He does, and she lays it on the coals to cook. But before it is half cooked, Weetamoo exercises her prerogative as mistress and cuts off half of it for herself. Fearing she will lose it all, Mrs. Rowlandson is obliged to eat the rest half-raw. "To the hungry soul, every bitter thing is sweet," she quotes.

The next day, Mrs. Rowlandson's contingent of Indians is to cross the Connecticut River to meet the main body of Indians - joined together around their leader Metacomet (King Philip to the English). This time the Indians have canoes for the crossing. But just as Mrs. Rowlandson is getting into a canoe, there is a sudden outcry among the Indians, and they scatter in all directions. Mrs. Rowlandson is hustled a distance farther up the river. English scouts had just been sighted.

As Mrs. Rowlandson's party is stopped for rest and food along the river bank, her son Joseph suddenly appears for another brief reunion. She gives him her Bible to read from, and he wonders at opening to the following verse: "I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord; the Lord has chastened me sore, yet He hath not given me over to death."

The next morning, Mrs. Rowlandson is canoed across the river and finds herself once more in the midst of a large convocation of Indians, rallying for an attack on the English town of Northampton. As the Indians greet each other, laugh and trade stories of their victories, Mrs. Rowlandson for the first time breaks down into tears. Quanopen asks why she is crying, and she replies that they will surely kill her. He assures her that no harm will come to her and gives her a few spoonfuls of corn meal and some peas to comfort her. She savors every morsel of food she gets.

She is taken to meet Metacomet (King Philip). He is a leader of great stature, educated among the English, but choosing to return to his own culture to rally the divergent Indian tribes in this effort against the English. But here he appears as a quiet family man. He offers Mrs. Rowlandson tobacco to smoke, but she declines to smoke with him, having disavowed the habit. Metacomet asks her to knit a shirt for his son - a boy of 6, high-spirited and disobedient. Metacomet is a very permissive father. In payment for her knitting, Metacomet gives Mrs. Rowlandson a shilling, which she in turn offers to Quanopen, but he tells her to keep it. She barter it with another Indian for a piece of meat. Another Indian woman offers her some peas if she will knit her a pair of stockings. Mrs. Rowlandson boils the meat and peas together and offers some to Quanopen and Weetamoo - a gesture to demonstrate her growing ability to adapt to their life. Quanopen accepts, but the proud Weetamoo refuses because she has not been served in a separate dish. But Quanopen forces Weetamoo to eat one token bite - off the end of his knife.

Again Mrs. Rowlandson runs into her son Joseph. She finds him lying face down on the ground and asks how he can sleep that way. He replies that he was not sleeping, but praying, and lying in this manner so that the Indians would not know what he was doing.

The warriors return from Northampton, again in triumph, with horses and sheep as plunder. Mrs. Rowlandson tries to talk a warrior into carrying her upon one of the horses to Albany to sell her to the French in exchange for gun powder. The warrior seems interested, which gives Mrs. Rowlandson some (false) hope. He hires her to make him a shirt.

But instead of Albany, she finds herself moving again with Quanopen and Weetamoo to another encampment farther up the river. It is mid-March now, and the rain is melting away the snow, replacing it with mud.

When Mrs. Rowlandson delivers the shirt to the warrior who had commissioned it, the Indian claims to have nothing to pay her with. But Mrs. Rowlandson is persistent in demanding payment, stopping by his wigwam whenever she goes to the river to fetch water. Finally he gives her a knife - which Quanopen later asks her to give to him. Mrs. Rowlandson is pleased to have found something that Quanopen wants. She curries his favor. She asks permission to visit her son, who is now camped about one mile away. Quanopen agrees. She sets out alone and quickly gets lost in the hills and swamps. The wilderness continues to hold a horror for her. Quanopen finds her in this despairing mood and accompanies her to her son. Joseph is sick and his spirit down, which further depresses Mrs. Rowlandson. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee," comforts her Bible.

Looking for food, Mrs. Rowlandson ventures into a neighboring wigwam and finds an Indian woman who treats her very kindly and gives her some meat. Mrs. Rowlandson puts the meat in her pocket and goes back to Weetamoo's wigwam, but is reluctant to cook it lest Weetamoo again lay claim to it. The next morning she goes back to the wigwam of the friendly woman to cook the meat there and is given some ground-nuts to eat also. The woman suggest that she will buy Mrs. Rowlandson from Quanopen if she is able.

That night, unable to find a place in front of the fire in Weetamoo's crowded wigwam, Mrs. Rowlandson steals away again to her new friend who lets her sleep there. But in the morning, one of Weetamoo's male entourage comes looking for Mrs. Rowlandson and drags her back to Weetamoo's, kicking her and verbally abusing her. Weetamoo's people are feasting on venison, but they will not give any to Mrs. Rowlandson.

In the morning, Weetamoo comes upon Mrs. Rowlandson reading her Bible. Weetamoo snatches it from her hands and throws it out into the mud. Mrs. Rowlandson runs out and hides the Bible away in the pouch of her apron. The Indians are packing up to move yet again, and the prospect weighs heavy upon Mrs. Rowlandson. When the Indians present her with the load she is to carry, Mrs. Rowlandson complains it is too heavy, and Weetamoo slaps her in the face for her insolence.

But Mrs. Rowlandson's spirits revive when she realizes that they are to travel not further Northward, but Southward back down the river retracing their steps. She asks Quanopen if this means that they are going to sell her back to her husband and he answers yes.

But her happiness is short-lived. For after they have travelled only a short distance, Weetamoo decides to turn back to their previous camp and to take Mrs. Rowlandson with her. Quanopen, however, says he will continue on and rejoin them in a couple of days. Mrs. Rowlandson is furious, but has no choice but to go back with Weetamoo. And with her protector Quanopen gone, she knows that she will receive no kindness from her mistress.

That night Weetamoo tells Mrs. Rowlandson that because they have many quests with them, there will be no room for Mrs. Rowlandson by the fire, and so she should go out and find somewhere else to sleep. Mrs. Rowlandson complains that the last time she slept somewhere else, Weetamoo sent someone after her who beat her. At this point, one of Weetamoo's male friends draws his sword and threatens to run Mrs. Rowlandson through if she does not leave immediately. She leaves the wigwam.

She goes from wigwam to wigwam asking to sleep there, but everyone refuses her. Finally, an old Indian and his wife offer to put her up and give her something to eat.

Starting off down the river again, Mrs. Rowlandson complains that her load is so heavy it is rubbing the skin off her back. Weetamoo's friend ominously tells her that it would be no matter to them if her head were off too.

They make camp in a thicket of brush. Mrs. Rowlandson inquires after her son and is told by a sarcastic Indian that "his master roasted him" and that he himself had "eaten a piece of him as big as two fingers" and that he was "very good meat." Mrs. Rowlandson is deeply depressed by these lies. Hiding from Weetamoo in the brush, she opens her Bible for comfort - but for once finds nothing to elevate her mood in the verse.

That night in Weetamod's wigwam, Mrs. Rowlandson removes a log from the fire which is blocking the heat from her. She looks up and a squaw angrily throws ashes in her face, blinding her. Huddling in the corner, her tears gradually wash the dirt from her eyes.

Indian warriors come jubilantly through Weetamoo's camp, just back from a raid on Hadley, with a captive Englishman named Thomas Read. Curious, Mrs. Rowlandson goes out to see him and finds Read crying bitterly on the assumption that the Indians will kill him. Mrs. Rowlandson intervenes, asking the Indians their intentions and they say they won't kill him. This cheers the Englishman somewhat. Mrs. Rowlandson asks him if he knows anything of her husband. Read replies that Rev. Rowlandson is alive and well, but melancholy at her captivity. This is a great relief to Mrs. Rowlandson. She repeats to Read some of the lies that she has been told by the Indians - some who claimed to have killed her husband; other who said that, convinced she was dead, he had remarried.

Metacomet's Indian maid comes to Mrs. Rowlandson with a baby in her arms and asks for a part of Mrs. Rowlandson's apron to wrap the baby in. Mrs. Rowlandson refuses. Weetamoo tells her to give the cloth to the maid, but again she refuses. The maid threatens to tear a piece of her apron off. If she does, Mrs. Rowlandson counters, she will tear the maid's coat. With that, Weetamoo grabs a big stick and swings it at Mrs. Rowlandson, who jumps out of the way. Before Weetamoo can swing at her again, Mrs. Rowlandson runs to the maid and gives her the whole apron. This appeases Weetamoo.

Her son Joseph is again nearby, so Mrs. Rowlandson goes to him to convey the good news that Rev. Rowlandson, his father, is alive and well. Joseph relates how he had been taken by his master on a journey toward Albany to get gunpowder from the French, but that some Mohawk Indians (traditional enemies of the New England Indians) had attacked them killing four of their company. Consequently, they had turned back.

Mrs. Rowlandson also attends to another captured English youth, one John Gilbert, aged 17, of Springfield, who she finds lying on the ground quite sick and without proper clothing. The shivering boy had been kicked out of his master's wigwam. Mrs. Rowlandson persuades him to get up and move to a fire, lest he die there. He can hardly walk, but she helps him to a neighboring fire and leaves him there. Later, the daughter of Gilbert's master comes to Mrs. Rowlandson and accusingly wants to know what she did with the boy. Mrs. Rowlandson accompanies the girl to where she left John Gilbert. But, by the time Mrs. Rowlandson gets back to Weetamoo's, word has spread that she had tried to run away taking the boy with her. In a rage, they threaten to knock her on the head with a hatchet if she tries to leave the wigwam again. She is too scared to even venture out for food. She remains confined for a day and a half without food until a warrior comes looking for her to do some knitting. He has some stockings that are too big for him - so he wants her to unravel them and reknit them to his size. Mrs. Rowlandson takes the opportunity to ask Weetamoo if she may leave the wigwam to deal with this warrior ; and Weetamoo consents. He gives her some food; and she takes advantage of being out of Weetamoo's sight to consult her Bible. The comforting passage reads: "For a small moment I have forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee."

Joseph comes to visit Mrs. Rowlandson, and she obtains permission from Joseph's master to let him spend some time with her while she combs out his hair which is full of lice. When Joseph complains of hunger, Mrs. Rowlandson suggests that he stop at each wigwam on his way back and beg for food (as she has so many times successfully done).

Sometime later Joseph comes running back to report that because he took so long getting home, his master became angry and beat him and then sold him. Mrs. Rowlandson goes along with Joseph to meet his new master, who assures her that he loves Joseph and will care for him properly. (This is the last she sees of Joseph during her captivity).

That night, Mrs. Rowlandson is again turned out of the wigwam because Weetamoo's baby is sick. Mrs. Rowlandson finds another place to sleep and in the morning finds out that Weetamoo's baby has died. All day mourners come to Weetamoo's wigwam for the wake. Mrs. Rowlandson does not mourn, such is her bitterness toward Weetamoo, but instead comments that there was one benefit to the child's death - it left more room in the wigwam.

Again they pack and resume their journey Southward. Along the way, they kill a pregnant deer, and Mrs. Rowlandson is given some of the fawn to eat. At nightfall, it begins to rain (it now being April), and the Indians quickly put up a bark wigwam in which Mrs. Rowlandson is allowed to sleep. Several Indians sleep outside on the ground in the rain.

Travelling on the next day, they arrive again at the river they had before crossed on rafts; but this time they must wade across it. With the icy water up to her knees, Mrs. Rowlandson staggers through the swift current with great difficulty - convinced

that this is finally where she will die. The Indians laugh at her plight. But she makes it and puts back on her shoes and stockings and follows after them.

They are soon met by an Indian messenger who tells Mrs. Rowlandson that she is to go immediately to Wachuset, a mountain not far from Lancaster, where Quanopen is negotiating her ransom back to the English. Elated by this fresh hope, now Mrs. Rowlandson is actually disappointed when they decide to push on only one more mile before camping.

At this camp, Mrs. Rowlandson sees a company of 30 men on horseback approaching, all dressed in English apparel. But her heart sinks when they turn out to be Indians in disguise.

Continuing on toward Wachuset, Mrs. Rowlandson grows progressively weaker for lack of food. When they stop at an Indian village, she goes from wigwam to wigwam begging for food and taking pleasure from such tidbits given her as boiled horse's hoof and intestine. Weetamoo tells her that she disgraces her master (Quanopen) by begging and that if she does it any more, they will knock her on the head. Mrs. Rowlandson replies that they might as well knock her on the head as starve her.

The next day, they come within sight of Mount Wachuset in the distance, but first they must cross a great swamp. It is with the greatest of difficulties that Mrs. Rowlandson trudges through the swamp up to her knees in mud and water. Metacomet, who has recently joined them, walks next to Mrs. Rowlandson, helping her along. He tells her that in two more weeks, she will be her own mistress again. He also tells her that Quanopen is waiting for them at Wachuset.

Arriving at Wachuset, Mrs. Rowlandson is indeed glad to see Quanopen, for it means that her ordeal at the hands of Weetamoo is over. Quanopen asks Mrs. Rowlandson when she last washed herself? It has been a month. He himself fetches water for her, and she gladly bathes. He also provides a mirror so she can see how she looks. The squaw he has been living with at Wachuset, an older woman, gives Mrs. Rowlandson some beans, meat and cake. These kindnesses so move her that when Weetamoo's maid comes to fetch her back from the wigwam of this older squaw, Mrs. Rowlandson falls to weeping. The older woman, to cheer her, promises her more food and lodging should she need it.

Weetamoo, fearful of losing both Mrs. Rowlandson's services and her ransom money, for the first time shows her some kindness. She gives Mrs. Rowlandson a mat to lie on and a rug to cover her. Other Indians trade her a hat, a silk handkerchief, and an apron in exchange for knitting.

Two "Christian Indians" (those who have completely adopted the English way of life), named Tom Dublet and Peter Conway, arrive at the camp with a letter from the Massachusetts Council regarding the ransom of Mrs. Rowlandson and another captive woman. Mrs. Rowlandson had know both of these so-called "praying Indians" when they lived peaceably in a town near Lancaster before the hostilities. She is so happy to see them, that she takes them by the hand and bursts into tears. She asks about her husband and friends, and they reply that all are well, but melancholy. They have brought her a few biscuits and a pound of tobacco (that an earlier communication from the Indians had claimed Mrs. Rowlandson desired). She denies any desire for tobacco and quickly trades it away to the Indians.

Later, when a warrior asks for some of her tobacco, she explains that it is all gone. The warrior starts ranting and threatening her. She tells him that when her husband comes for her, he will bring more tobacco. The warrior replies: "Hang him! I will knock out his brains if he comes here!"

The Indian leaders hold a meeting to decide what answer to sent the English about the ransom. They call Mrs. Rowlandson to the meeting and ask her how much money she thinks her husband would give for her return. She suggests the rather large sum of 20 pounds, but adds that she hopes they will accept less. Another Praying Indian, James the Printer, writes the reply that is sent off to Boston, saying that the Indians are willing to negotiate and asking that Mr. Rowlandson personally come for his wife and bring 20 pounds for her redemption.

Even as these negotiations are in motion, the Indians organize a war dance in preparation for an assault on the town of Sudbury, near Boston itself. Mrs. Rowlandson watches the ritual ceremony with great distaste, for it is devil-worship to her.

When the war party returns from Sudbury, they come victorious, having burnt the town, killed some 100 English including two militia captains, and suffering only light casualties themselves. This is confirmed to Mrs. Rowlandson by an English captive they bring back with them. Yet, curiously, the returning party is not particularly jubilant, but sober and quiet - a mystery to Mrs. Rowlandson and the captive alike.

One returning warrior invites Mrs. Rowlandson to his wigwam that night and gives her food. But as she is eating, another Indian points out that her benefactor "seems to be your good

friend, but he killed two Englishmen at Sudbury, and there lie their clothes behind you." He points to a pile of English clothes, bloody and burnt with bullet holes.

The next day, the Indians move their camp about 4 miles, then set about building a large wigwam, big enough to hold 100 Indians, in preparation for a day of dancing and celebration. They frighten Mrs. Rowlandson by suggesting that because of the raid on Sudbury, the Governor in Boston will not proceed with the ransoming negotiations.

Indians seem to be arriving from all over for the day of celebration. Among them is a captive English woman, Goodwife Kettle, who commiserates with Mrs. Rowlandson and tells her of both her sister and her daughter Mary being held captive nearby. Mrs. Rowlandson begs Quanopen to let her go visit them, but he refuses.

On Sunday, April 30th, John Hoar, an English lawyer from Concord, together with the two previous messengers Tom Dublet and Peter Conway, arrive at the village with a letter from Boston. The Indians conceal Mrs. Rowlandson in a wigwam, grab their guns and run out. Moments later, she hears several gunshots; and she fears they have shot her would-be rescuers. Actually, the Indians have simply sought to intimidate Mr. Hoar by firing shots in the air around his horse and then pushing and shoving him around as they lead him to a wigwam to talk with their leaders.

Presently, Mrs. Rowlandson is taken to see Mr. Hoar, who has indeed come with 20 pounds intending to ransom her. Mrs. Rowlandson asks about her husband and friends and is told they are well and looking forward to seeing her. Mr. Hoar has brought many provisions with him, including tobacco, which she promptly sells.

But when Mrs. Rowlandson asks the Indians if she will be sent back home with Mr. Hoar, they all reply no. On this troubling prospect, they sleep the night.

In the morning, Mr. Hoar invites the Indian leaders to dine with him on provisions he has brought in his saddle bags. But it turns out that some of the food has been stolen during the night, which theft the Indians ashamedly lay to some wicked mischief-makers among them. The Indians come to Mr. Hoar's dinner, but eat very little, as they are too busy dressing for their dancing ceremony.

Inside the large wigwam built for the occasion, 8 dancers (4 men and 4 women) perform the frenetic dancing, with singing and percussion provided by two musicians. Quanopen and Weetamoo, dressed in their grandest finery, are two of the dancers. Weetamoo has bracelets all down her arms, layers of necklaces around her neck, jewels in her ears; her hair is powdered white, her face painted red. Shellwork wampum covers her torso. Quanopen is almost as elaborately dressed in sheaves of wampum, a lace white shirt with silver buttons, white stockings and garters of shilling coins that jingle as he moves.

The dancing goes on all day. At nightfall, Mrs. Rowlandson again asks if they will let her go and is again told no - not unless her husband comes for her.

After Mrs. Rowlandson and Mr. Hoar have lain down for the night, the Christian Indian James the Printer comes to them to report that Quanopen would let Mrs. Rowlandson go home tomorrow if Mr. Hoar would give him one pint of whiskey. Mr. Hoar gathers Tom Dublet and Peter Conway and get Quanopen to repeat his promise to the three of them. They give him the whiskey.

Metacomet, sensing that something is going on, calls Mrs. Rowlandson to him and asks what she would give him to put in a good word for her release (thus hoping she will reveal Quanopen's scheme). Mrs. Rowlandson replies that she will give him anything she has. He quotes his price as being 2 coats and 20 shillings of money, a half bushel of seed-corn and some tobacco.

Back at the wigwam, Quanopen comes raging in, quite drunk, and alternates between drinking to Mr. Hoar's health and suggesting that he be hanged. Then he calls to Mrs. Rowlandson and drinks to her health. This so irritates Weetamoo that she runs from the wigwam with Quanopen pursuing her. This is the last Mrs. Rowlandson sees of them.

In the morning, the Indians call a court to decide if Mrs. Rowlandson should go home. All agree she should, except Metacomet who argues that the hostilities have gone so far that to return the captives would be to give up the only thing now holding the English back from retaliation. He considers the others gravely misled to believe that peaceful terms can now be negotiated.

Nonetheless, that afternoon, Mrs. Rowlandson, Mr. Hoar, Tom Dublet, and Peter Conway ride away from the Indian encampment. Mrs. Rowlandson's captivity has ended.

"Thus saith the Lord," quotes Mrs. Rowlandson, observing the aftermath of her captivity, "If any of thine be driven out to the utmost parts of Heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies and on them which hate thee, which persecuteth thee."

In a series of quick vignettes, we see Mrs. Rowlandson arrive back into an English town and her reunion with her husband; her son Joseph we see traded to an English storekeeper in exchange for money; and her daughter Mary simply wanders alone from the woods into an English town, and quickly the townsfolk crowd around her.

"Quickly the Heathen began to fall," relates Mrs. Rowlandson, "and that summer they came to utter ruin. It was as if, though they had made a pit as deep as Hell for the Christians, yet the Lord hurled the Heathens themselves into it. Where the Lord had so many ways on my journey preserved them, now he hath as many to destroy them."

In another series of quick vignettes, we see the fates of the Indians:

One-Eyed John Monoco is hung by the neck in a public square. While he is still half alive, a Praying Indian stabs a knife into his chest and drinks his heart-blood, saying: "Me stronger now than I was before. Me be so strong as me and he too; he be very strong man before he die."

Metacomet is lying by a small fire in the woods with a handful of other Indians when he is awakened with a start by a gun blast. He leaps to his feet and runs off into the woods. An Indian scout accompanying the English takes aim on him and shoots him in the back. Metacomet falls down dead into the brush.

We find Quanopen a captive of the English militia, who try to question him. With a proud and lofty bearing, he replies that he was born a prince, and if princes will come to speak with him,

he will answer; but none present being such, he is obliged by honor to hold his tongue and not discourse with such persons below his birth and quality." He asks to be put to death quickly. He is summarily shot and beheaded.

On a beach of Narragansett Bay, the waves lap gently at the naked body of Weetamoo, who has drown trying to swim to her escape.

"Before I knew what affliction meant," concludes Mrs. Rowlandson, I was ready sometimes to wish for it. When I lived in prosperity, having the comforts of the world about me, my relations by me, and my heart cheerful, and yet seeing others suffering under many trials and afflictions of sickness, weakness, poverty, loss, and the cares of the world, I was sometimes jealous lest I should have my portion of affliction in this life. And that scripture would come to my mind saving "For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Affliction I wanted, and affliction I had - full measure, pressing down and running over. And now, if trouble from smaller matters begin to arise in me, I have something at hand to check myself with. I have learned to look beyond present and smaller troubles and be quieted under them, as Moses said: "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord."

As we hear these final words of Mrs. Rowlandson, we see her, restored to a fine home, but standing in utter horror as her daughter Mary, in a state of demonic possession, tears pages from the Bible and throws them gleefully in the air, screaming maniacally, then tearing her clothes to bare her breasts, finally falling to the floor in a writhing fit. And we see that the plagues afflicting our forebears are not yet over.

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