



DEAR AMERICA

*The Diary of  
Remember Patience  
Whipple*



A Journey to the  
New World

KATHRYN LASKY

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# To today's young immigrants, pilgrims all



While the events described and some of the characters in this book may be based on actual historical events and real people, Remember Patience Whipple is a fictional character, created by the author, and her diary and its epilogue are works of fiction.  
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were a man. I wish I were a bird. I wish I were a whale. Anything to get off this ship.

Dorothy Bradford is talking to herself. Well, not exactly to herself, rather to little John Bradford. Hummy and I hear her. If you come upon her of a sudden and she be mumbling, she looks startled and tries to cover up. But Hummy and I just this morning saw her and she did not see us. She was staring at a barrel and carrying on so animated in her conversation that you could have sworn that little John Bradford was sitting right there atop that barrel. I felt so sorry for her.

Love,  
Mem

**November 28, 1620**

**Cape Cod Harbor**

Dear Imp,

Thirty-four men, my father amongst them, did set off today. Some in the shallop, others in the longboat, to make a more complete exploration of some of the nearby rivers. The weather was fierce and the day laced with crosswinds, so we are not

sure how far they will get. There is talk that we shall not settle here near this beach and harbor at all, for the harbor is shallow and ill suited for shipping traffic. 'Tis said that the true object of this second exploration is to find another place for our settlement.

They shall be gone for a few days, so we must be patient yet again and wait and wonder.

Love,  
Mem

**November 30, 1620**

**Cape Cod Harbor**

Dear Imp,

Hoorah, the men have returned earlier than expected. They did in fact make it to the mouth of one of the rivers in the shallop and explored that river and another smaller one and the surrounding valleys. Father said they went back to the place where they had originally found the corn and found even more, and beans, too, which they brought back with them. They now call this place Cornhill. Father and all the men say that this

finding of corn is a sign of the special providence of God; thus showing his great mercy upon us poor souls and thus providing us with seed corn to plant next year. And they be so blessed to find it now, as soon the ground will be frozen hard and covered with snow.

Whenever the men come close, the Indians always seem to vanish before they can get even a glimpse. This is very disappointing to Hummy and me. We are so anxious for a full and complete description of a feathered man. Where exactly do they wear their feathers? We are most curious since we have heard that they are given to going around mostly naked.

The explorers, however, did discover a new kind of Indian abode, one made with boughs bent into hoops and stuck into the ground at both ends. Into this frame were woven smaller branches and the whole was covered with woven mats and strips of bark. In the houses they found a lovely assortment of baskets made from all variety of materials including crab shells. In nearby tree hollows they found stores of venison. They brought back a few of these things with them to the ship. I wish they could have brought back a whole twig house. Father

did leave the ribbon poppets that Hummy and I made and it gives us deep pleasure to think of these Indians seeing these cunning little dollies.

There is now going on a great discussion as to whether we should remain here. It is getting on to winter and with weather setting in we cannot be ranging about much longer.

I'm not sure what I think, Imp. Of course, no one is asking me. I want to be able to get off this ship and sleep on shore and have a roof over my head. But mostly, I want us to all have a piece of ground in the New World we can call our own.

Good night, dear Imp.

Love,  
Mem

**December 3, 1620**

**Cape Cod Harbor**

Dear Imp,

Have not written because nothing to write. There be unending discussions as to whether a third exploration party should be set out to find another possible place for our settlement. There