

Chief Powhatan's Address to Captain John Smith

Adapted

VOCABULARY

succession: inheriting a title or office

simple: unknowledgeable

provisions: food and supplies

rashness: decisions made without careful consideration

famish: starve

insist: advise

jealousy: anxiety, fear

I am now grown old and must soon die, and the succession must descend in order, to my brothers, Opitchapam, Opechancanough, and Kekataugh, and then to my two sisters, and their two daughters.

I wish their experience was equal to mine, and that your love to us might not be less than ours to you. Why should you take by force that from us which you can have by love? Why should you destroy us who have provided you with food? What can you get by war? We can hide our provisions and fly into the woods. And then you must consequently famish by wrongdoing your friends.

What is the cause of your jealousy? You see us unarmed and willing to supply your wants if you come in a friendly manner; not with swords and guns as to invade an enemy. I am not so simple as not to know that it is better to eat good meat, lie well, and sleep quietly with my women and children; to laugh and be merry with the English, and, being their friend, to have copper, hatchets, and whatever else I want, than to fly from all, to lie cold in the woods, feed upon acorns, roots and such trash, and to be so hunted that I cannot rest, eat, or sleep. In such circumstances, my men must watch, and if a twig should but break, all would cry out, "Here comes Captain Smith." And so, in this miserable manner to end my miserable life. And, Captain Smith, this might soon be your fate too through your rashness and unadvisedness.

I, therefore, exhort you to peaceable councils, and above all, I insist that the guns and swords, the cause of all our jealousy and uneasiness, be removed and sent away.

Armstrong, W. C. *The Life And Adventures of Captain John Smith: Comprising an Account of His Travels In Europe, Asia, Africa And America: Also, the Early History of Virginia And New England, Including Sketches of Pocahontas, Powhatan, Opechancanough, And Other Distinguished Characters.* New York: H. Dayton, 1858.

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