



Amelia's  
Dream

*A Colonial Girl's Adventures*

Jami Borek



Amelia's  
Dream

*A Colonial Girl's Adventures*

Jami Borek

Amelia's Dream

Copyright © 2015 by Shrewsbury Press

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews.

ISBN-10 0991536657

ISBN-13 978-09915366-5-8

Published by:





chapter 1



*A*melia had shelled so many beans that her fingers could do it almost automatically. As her fingers pulled the beans out of their shells and dropped them into the wooden bowl on her lap, her mind couldn't help but wander.

First she was wondering what to buy at the Fredericksburg Market Fair. The Fair was only a couple of weeks away now. Some sweetmeats of course, but what kind? Lemon drops? Sugared almonds? What about a new silken ribbon for her cap? Did she have enough money for a new pair of earrings?

Then her thoughts turned to years away, thinking about the far-off future. Someday, when she was grown up, she'd be leaving the Browns. She would have to be on her own then. She didn't want to be a servant all her life, but what else could she do? What would she do to support herself?

All the time Amelia was shelling beans, Miss Elizabeth had been busy cooking dinner at the fireplace. She stirred the soup in the heavy iron stew pot that hung over the fire and turned and basted the roast on the long iron spit that hung there also. Then she straightened up, massaged her back, and turned to look at Amelia. When she saw Amelia still wasn't done, she gave her the most terrible frown.

"You haven't finished yet?" she said angrily. "I swear, you're the slowest girl I ever did know. Hurry up! I need to get them cooking."

Miss Elizabeth could be a strict old sourpuss, like she was now, but Amelia knew that the cook really liked her. She always made sure that Amelia had plenty to eat and even gave her special treats in addition. Sometimes it might be an extra baked apple with whipped sweet cream or an extra-large slice of sweet potato pie. Sometimes, if Amelia was lucky, it was her very favorite treat—bits of leftover dough fried in butter and sprinkled with cinnamon and sugar.

Amelia knew that her life was pretty good, all things considered. Miss Elizabeth was nice to her and so were Mr. and Mrs. Brown, the couple she worked for.

The Browns treated Amelia pretty well, especially considering that they didn't have so much themselves to begin with. They weren't even well-to-do, much less wealthy. All their lives they'd worked here and there, in different places around Virginia. They did whatever they could for whoever would hire them. Now they lived in Fredericksburg, helping with Mr. Dixon's store and living in a house that he'd lent them.





Mr. Dixon didn't charge them any rent at all. He owned a lot of houses in Fredericksburg and a lot of them were empty. Amelia had heard Mr. Brown talking about it to Mrs. Brown. Mr. Dixon thought Fredericksburg was growing so fast that he could make money selling houses, so he'd borrowed a lot of money to buy and build them.

"The man's a dreamer," Mr. Brown had said, sounding worried and disapproving. "Who's going to buy all these houses? Now he's in debt and how will he get out of it? The town's not growing so fast as that. Where are all the rich folks going to come from, that can afford to buy all those houses?"

The Browns weren't in debt and that was a blessing, but they didn't have much money either. They lived pretty much from day to day, with nothing left over for saving.

Still they gave Amelia what they could, and even some little luxuries. She had warm clothes for the winter and plenty of food. She had a nice cozy mattress to sleep on, with a soft feather pillow and a real wool blanket. They even gave her a pair of leather shoes with shiny brass buckles and little silver rings for her earlobes.

Sometimes they would yell at her and scold her, but mostly when they did, she knew she'd done something foolish. Like the time she'd gotten angry at a customer in the store and told him that he was stupid. She'd gotten in a lot of trouble over that but she understood why. You

couldn't expect the customers to come back to your store if you called them names. There were other stores they could go to.

The Browns didn't have many servants, just Amelia and Miss Elizabeth. So Amelia helped Miss Elizabeth in the kitchen and did all kinds of other chores. She laid the wood for the fires, lit them, and tended them to keep them burning nicely. She did the washing up and the cleaning, helped with the laundry and the store, and ran errands whenever they asked her to.

Once she'd finished shelling the beans ("It's about time you finished, you lazy girl!" Miss Elizabeth said to her crossly), Amelia watched over the food while it finished cooking. She stirred the pot, turned the roast, and added more wood to keep the fire nicely burning. Then, when the roast was done and Miss Elizabeth took it off the spit to carve, Amelia set the table.

She laid out the knives, plates, and spoons, lining them up neatly on the bare wood table. There were just two of everything, one for Mr. Brown and one for his wife. Miss Elizabeth and Amelia didn't eat with them. They usually ate the leftovers when the Browns were done, sitting there on stools in the kitchen.

Amelia wondered what it would be like to eat dinner at a proper table every day, not with the Browns, but with her very own parents. She couldn't really remember what



it was like having parents. She was so young the last time she saw them. It was hard being all alone, with no mother, no father, no sisters, nor brothers. Sometimes she felt pretty lonely. She knew she was lucky though, compared to a lot of other people.

She just didn't know how lucky she was, not really. She didn't know it until later on, when all her good luck was gone.

