



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

The Silent Cavalier

Elsie Spicer Eells

In the early days when the Azores had just been discovered there were many Flemish settlers who came to the islands. Among them there was a young cavalier of the order of St. George of Borgonha. His name was Jesus Maria and the reason why he had come was because a wise monk had told him that his path in life lay by way of the sea.

"Your name given to you in Holy Baptism," said the monk, "is Iesvs Maria. Transpose the letters and it says in Latin, Maris es via."

The young cavalier agreed that the sea must be his path of destiny and he at once set sail upon a long voyage which finally led him to the island of Fayal. He loved the rocky coast where the waves beat. He loved the deep ravine where the laughing brook ran, the lake in the ancient crater, the snow-capped summit of Mt. Pico which smiled down in stately majesty from the opposite island. He decided that this was to be his home.

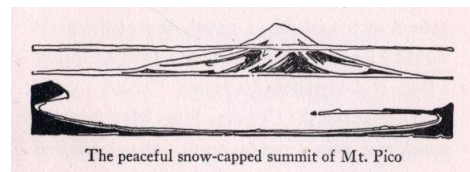
"My path of Destiny was indeed the sea," he said. "The sea has brought me to a country which is very fair."

In the island of Fayal there were already some Portuguese settlers. One of these had a beautiful daughter Ida. The young Flemish cavalier thought that she was the fairest maid he had ever seen. He fell deeply in love with her.

Now the cavaliers of the order of St. George of Borgonha had vowed that they would never wed. Jesus Maria could not break the solemn pledge which he had given when he joined the order. Neither could he forget the bright eyes of the Portuguese maiden Ida. It seemed as if his heart would break.

"I will leave this island and return to my own country," he thought.

Then he remembered the words which the wise monk had said about the sea being his path. He had followed that road and it had led him to a fair island home. He decided that he could not return to his native land of Flanders. Over across the shining blue water he looked up at the peaceful snow-capped summit of Mt. Pico. The sight of its majestic stillness seemed to give him strength to hold his tongue and keep him from speaking words of love to the beautiful Portuguese maiden. Never a word of love broke from him. The maiden Ida never knew the shrine she occupied in the heart of the Flemish cavalier.



The days dragged slowly by. The young man could bear no more. He felt that his strength could no longer endure on the same island with Ida. If he stayed near her he would break his vow.

One morning in a little boat he crossed the blue waters to the island of Pico. At the foot of the majestic mountain he loved, he built the little hut which was to be his home. He never returned to the island of Fayal, and as the years went by he was spoken of as the good hermit of Pico. Nobody knew his secret.

When at last the Cavalier Jesus Maria died, a peach tree grew from his tomb,—the emblem of silence. The leaf of this tree has the form of the human tongue. Its fruit has a stone shaped somewhat like the human heart. From this stone there comes a seed which when planted produces a new tree. Thus it is that words which bear fruit spring from the heart. It is silence which teaches one the gift of fruitful words, they say in the Azores.

Stories help us explore cultures, learn moral lessons, connect with nature — or simply have fun. That's why ririro.com offers 3,000+ free stories — fairy tales, fables, bedtime stories, myths and more — for every age, in 13 languages, with free printable PDFs and often audio. Reading should be a right, not a privilege. Share ririro.com and spread the joy of reading.

Instagram: @ririro_reading · Pinterest: pinterest.com/ririrocom