

name with similar uneasiness. "I saw her only for a moment when we came ashore yesterday. Dost know her, thou?"

Pedro turned away with a gesture as if to wave him off. He faced about. "Do I know her! Warily and charily, señor—as a pup knoweth the family cat! Ah, *Madre!* Lieutenant Cristoval, she hath a tongue like a flail—like a red-hot rapier. Thou shouldst hear her storm—at some other man—when she is roused! Nay, smile not! I once heard her berating her servants, and they wilted, withered, shrivelled like spiders on a hot skillet. Ah, stew me! Bolio!"

"Thou dost stir mine interest, Pedro," said Cristoval. "Who is the lady?"

Pedro laid a broad hand upon the table with suppressed vehemence. "Bolio!" he replied, as if nothing could be added.

"I know little save from hearsay, señor," he continued; "she was a *vivandera* with the armies in Italy in her youth. Thou knowest that training. *Diablo!* I saw her in the Neapolitan campaign against Louis XII."

Cristoval interrupted. "What! Didst serve with Gonsalvo?"

"With the Great Captain," said Pedro.

"Then, by Saint Michael, we were comrades!"

Pedro nodded without surprise, and continued quickly: "She had beauty then, señor. Poor girl! She was learning, by hard experience, to hold all men her enemies. She hath not forgotten. I heard of her again in the campaign of '22, and again at Pavia, where I left my leg. After that, no more until I found her here at Panama, two years ago. It is said she worked her way hither from Spain, disguised as a common sailor, and I doubt it not, for I have known of another