

the cool rim of a cup against his lips. He drank the wine and water, helpless and obedient as a child.

"Is it the merciful *señorita*?" he asked when the cup was withdrawn.

"Yes," came the reply, in a faint but thrilling whisper.

"I do not ask your reason for planning to save us, but I thank you with all my heart," he said. "If you, too, wish to be saved from this place of despair — madam, I ask no questions — I shall blithely risk my life to save you. It is for the love of one merciful and beautiful woman that I cling to life — then in the service of another as merciful, and perhaps as beautiful, let me lose it."

"What is the name of the woman you love?" asked the voice of the *señorita*, so low that he could scarcely hear the words.

"Isobel," replied Drurie frankly. It was like food to his hungry heart to speak of his love.

"Then, for her sake, you must save yourself and me," came the faint reply. "Before midnight your chains shall be unfastened. Be wise and brave. For her sake — Heaven prosper you, my captain."

He felt the touch of lips on his hand. Quick as thought, for all the blindness of his bandaged eyes, he caught one of her hands and pressed it to his lips.