

"Does not my lady remember how she came here? Does she not remember her cavalier?"

A convulsion seized the lady at the mention of a name which brought back to her mind a recollection of sorrow. There came a dim vision of Don Nunez de Castanello, then a demand to fulfill the last testament of her father from señor Olibanzo, a spirited refusal, a storm. Then came an attempt to escape—a capture—then threats—then a letter from the valet of Don Nunez, offering her a chance of escape. Then came another flight—then a confused mass of ideas and faces, and all manner of dangers besetting her; two men pursuing her; she had a remembrance of rocks, her horse unmanageable, a vision of a young cavalier pursuing; then a frightful abyss—the sharp report of a carbine; then—but she could remember no more. Where was she? yes; she had a vague remembrance of Orion, and of a fiend, but that was all, and she gave up the attempt and tried to rise; but her strength failing her she fell back upon the couch, and the gypsy child took one of her hands.

"Please, my lady, do not attempt to rise. Believe me, you have been very ill, and will become so again if you attempt it. My grandmama says you will be soon well, but here is some Madeira wine, taste it, my lady, and you will be better!"

She raised the tiny goblet to her lips, and took a swallow, but it seemed to choke her and she motioned it away. She seemed to revive soon after, and looking the dark-haired child full in the face, said: "But where is your grandmama of whom you speak? Can I see her, for I wish to know how I came here, and where I am?"

"The señora will allow me to explain: a noble cavalier pursued your horse for hours and hours among the mountains, and when, at last, you fell from your horse he brought you here, fearing you were dead. So you will see, my lady, how you came here, and you have now been ill—been unconscious for three hours."

"But where am I?"

"My lady, I fear, is not strong enough to hear, she is among those who will be friends to her, if she will allow them, although she may not always like to say she is a friend to them!"

"Speak, child! tell me where I am! Friends! how strangely the word sounds in my ears!"

"Señorita—, wait until to-morrow, my lady will then be better and stronger."

"Tell me now, I beseech; for it will drive me mad if I do not know—if I do not know now, but you hesitate?"

"Fearing lest you be sorry you pressed me to tell you, what you have heard! You fell from your horse in the mountains, the cavalier brought you to my grandmama's lodge in a swoon. He could not have brought you far, else he would have taken you to Cordova; but, my lady, is not in Cordova, where can she be?"