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itself may seem to you severe. And, believe me, I should be very sorry if I thought that—on your account. You will believe that?" and he made a motion to place his hands on mine as if to appeal to me.

"I should be deeply distressed if I thought you of yourself could do anything harsh or unjust. I do not think it possible."

"That is more like my Englishman of Podrida," he cried, gleefully; but, reverting to the grave tone, he added: "The senorita knows her punishment and quite acquiesces in its justice; although it carries with it no less than partial imprisonment for life."

"Your Majesty is not serious?" I exclaimed.

"Do I look otherwise?" he cried; but he could not maintain his gravity any longer, and burst into a merry peal of laughter. "Do you think I would do anything like that? Anything against the man who once wore this for me?" and he pulled out the little mask that he had begged of me that day on the road. "I know more now than I did then of the danger you ran for my sake. Can't you guess my riddle?"

His eyes were dancing with pleasure and mischief, and he put on the mask, and then thrust his hands into mine.

"This is not the only mask I've worn to-day, you see. Can't you guess? Have I really beaten you? That's glorious; and I thought it all out myself," he cried, laughing in high glee.

I began to see daylight then, and laughed with him. "I am not afraid of anything you would think of, sire."

"But you were afraid, you know. I saw it in your face just now, and I could hardly keep it up. I like you too much to wish to hurt you, even in play."