

Thus they kept up their show of indifference, going on about their work, as if the camp were not running over with strangers anxious to bargain with them.

When Ernst and Rob and the Deacon at last came in from Santa Fé, Marienella and I had hardly a word for them. Vain and frivolous creatures that we were, all our thoughts were of the wedding finery that the Deacon had been commissioned to purchase for us.

First of all we saw Rob, with a quaint little brass-bound trunk on his shoulder, and he was carrying a half-dozen bulging paper parcels under his arms. Marienella gasped.

"Oh! he will surely crush all our pretty things, flat as the tortilla my mother bakes!"

She ran and took them from him, and hurried before him to the carriage. The Deacon detained me, to put in my hand a key — an ancient silver key.

"It is for the little trunk, which the Señora is sending to you. You see I had to go to her after all to ask what would be suitable for your wedding-gown. I could not choose! And she would not permit it that you should wear, for a wedding-dress, anything that could be purchased in the shops of