

confess it, I threatened to tell the court, the world, all Spain, if he would not set my father free. But the other — can you forgive me, dear?"

She stood before him now, and the colour was fainter in her cheeks, for she trusted him with all her heart, and she put out her hands.

"Forgive you? What? For doing the bravest thing a woman ever did?"

"I thought you would know it in heaven and understand," she said. "It is better that you know it on earth — but it was hard to tell."

He held her hands together and pressed them to his lips. He had no words to tell her what he thought. Again and again he silently kissed the firm white fingers folded in his own.

"It was magnificent," he said at last. "But it will be hard to undo, very hard."

"What will it ever matter, since we know it is not true?" she asked. "Let the world think what it will, say what it likes —"

"The world shall never say a slighting word of you," he interrupted. "Do you think that I will let the world say openly what I would not hear from the King alone between these four walls? There is no fear of that, love. I will die sooner."

"Oh, no!" she cried, in sudden fear. "Oh, do not speak of death again to-night! I cannot bear the word!"

"Of life, then, of life together, — of all our lives in peace and love! But first this must be set right. It