

woman who did as much. *Por cierto*, her eloquence was not gained in camps alone! It hath the savor of the sea as well, and she commandeth the most vigorous that each affordeth, my head upon it! But whatever her youth, Señor Cristoval, the saints preserve the man who would turn a soft eye upon her to-day. She weigheth, I should guess, some twelve or fourteen stone. 'Tis all hostility!"

Cristoval reflectively gathered up his papers. "Well," he said, "we can pray for peace. Let us go."

"Whither?" asked Pedro.

"To the señora's."

"*Misericordia!* I think I had best ride back to my *hacienda* for the night, Señor Teniente."

"How far?" asked Cristoval.

"Three leagues or less."

"Absurd, Pedro! Thou'rt to begin thy duties in the morning. Come."

Accompanied reluctantly by the stout cook leading his mule, and followed by the halberdier, Cristoval led down a narrow, garbage-littered street to a large house built around the usual patio. It had been the residence of some officer of government, and its size made it suitable for the recruiting officer, the poverty of whose levies made it necessary to provide for their keep before sailing to join Pizarro. They entered the suggestively quiet court, and having seen that his recruits had made proper use of the kitchen, Cristoval gave orders concerning quarters for the night, and ascended to the second floor in quest of the señora. He found her alone in a dim-lighted, lofty, bare-walled apartment, — the salon of the establishment in its better days.

The señora was a black-haired, black-eyed woman of generous proportions. She wore, now and generally,