

## CHAPTER XII

### COMING OF THE CASTILIANS

**B**ECAUSE a runner from Kat-yi-ti had been killed on the trail by a mountain lion, and because the village of Povi-whah had forgotten the strangers from the south in the excitement of Tahn-té's return (for many there were who thought never to see him again!) — because of these things it was that the men of iron rode unseen by the river, and the alarm was called from sentry to sentry on the mesa where the workers in flint shaped the arrow-points, and were guards as well for the village below.

There was no mistaking the glint of sunlight on steel and helmet, and the beasts with strange strap-pings. The men of the beards were indeed at the very edge of their planted fields!

And they saw more than that, for they saw a girl who ran from the shore to meet them. So fleet was her running that her hair swept like a dusk cloud behind her, and the soldier Gonzalvo stared at her with open mouth.

“By the true cross, that looks better to me than the thimble full of gold!” he announced, and Don Ruy laughed and put his horse on the other side of Don Diego as though to protect him from temptation.

“You, and his reverence the padre, have the records and the prayers to your share,” he suggested, — “but eyes bright as those — and lips as tempting —”

"The heathen wench does look like the seven deadly sins for enticement," agreed Don Diego and made the sign of the cross.

"A shameless wench, indeed," agreed Padre Vicente — "with her bosom bare, and little but her hair as a cloak! — What is it she calls? — Holy God! — did you hear?"

All had halted now. Pretty women and girls had been hidden in the villages of their trail. Even if they chanced to glimpse one it was by chance — and among the wall-housed barbarians no dames bold as this one had been seen: — neither had one been seen so alluring.

Again her voice reached them and this time the tones were clear and the words certain.

"Greetings to you — Lords — Castilians!"

A shout went up from the men. At last a land had been reached where an interpreter was not needed for the woman. It put a different complexion on the day. Tired men straightened in their saddles and Ruy Sandoval laughed at the amaze on the face of Gonzalvo — that hardy soldier of many lands stared as if by a witch enthralled.

"How call you yourself, mistress?" inquired the priest coldly, "and is it the custom of the men of the Pō-sōn-gé to send their wives to greet men who travel?"

"Yahn Tsyn-deh I am," — she said — "and not wife."

"Humph!" the grunt of Maestro Diego was not polite. Even the desert might not be a safe place to bring youth if damsels of this like grew in the sage clumps. "It is said to be a good luck sign when a man comes first over the threshold on a New Year's day and on a Monday, — it starts the year and

the week aright — and how read you this of a female crossing first for us the line of welcome in the new land of treasure? — read you good fortune here in all that would be ill fortune at home? ”

“ Save your croaking since she is beautiful to a marvel! ” said Don Ruy lightly. “ If they tell us truly that the world is round, who knows that we may not be nicely balanced on an opposite to Seville, and all things of life and portent to be reversed? There’s a thought for your ‘ Relaciones! ’ — treasure it, senor! — treasure it! ”

“ I am not yet of a mind that the unsanctified globe theory is to be accepted by true believers! ” announced Don Diego with decision — “ that you well know! — and also you know that my scriptural evidence — ”

“ Is as good as that of any man! ” agreed his charge who was more his master and tormentor. “ But if we halt here while you make the maps of Cosmo in the sand, we will miss the rest of the maids, for all my looking shows me no others on the run to us. ”

Yahn was, meanwhile, with great unconcern, making braids of her hair, and breathing with more ease, and using her eyes well the while. The piercing look of the padre was the only one she faltered under, and that of Gonzalvo she met in elusive coquetry.

“ I am alone, ” she said to Don Ruy. “ The others feast this day. I know your words. I come alone; maybe you want that I talk for you. ”

“ It is true that we all want much talk from you — and perhaps some smiles — eh? But give not another to Juan Gonzalvo — he looks like a mooing calf from the last one he got, — and I warn you that such special happiness — ”



*A* LONELY FIGURE DESPITE HER TROPHIES

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“Peace!” said the padre with impatient authority. “The girl has understanding, and it is best to move warily when the ground is new. Are you the only one who speaks Castilian?”

“No — two more. Ka-yemo the chief of war — He is of my clan. He learn it with Capitan Coronado.”

The men closed around listening — this was the man they had heard of at Ah-ko and at Kat-yi-ti.

“He is the shaman who learned with Fray Luis,” said the padre. “We have heard of him, and of his unsanctified devotion to the false gods. We have come to save such souls for the true faith. And he is now Capitan — eh?”

“Ka-yemo is Capitan — not shaman. He speaks your words —”

“And the other one?”

“Other one!” — The face of Yahn darkened, her lips grew straight in a hard line — her bosom heaved. Tahn-té had seen and known her abasement — also her name had been among those put aside — always she would hate Tahn-té, — “The other one is the man of the feast. He has danced where other men fall dead in the dance. He does not fall dead — not anything makes him dead! He holds snakes like other men hold rabbits” (She was watching warily the faces of her listeners and saw them shrink in distaste) — her own face grew keen and bright with cunning. “It is true — like this he takes the snake” — she held a wand of willow about her neck, and then held it in both hands above her head — “like this — and calls it ‘brother of the sands.’ He calls eagles down from the clouds to him — other birds, too” — and her eyes took on a look of fear —

“and in dark nights — no — I can not say more words! It is bad medicine to say words of witches while witches are yet alive.”

“He was taught by the padres to be Christian: — yet turns back to the false gods, and — is a sorcerer?” demanded Maestro Diego. “You have your work plainly cut out for you, Eminence!” and he turned to Padre Vicente — “A leader who has been granted the light, yet seeks darkness, is but a burning brand for the pit!”

“But” — suggested the lad Chico — who spoke but rarely in the face of the company, “is there not white magic as well as the magic of the darkness? Did not the saints of the church deal openly in the white magic of their god? This pretty woman plainly has only hate — or fear — of the sorcerer. Does the dame strike any of you as being so saintly as to be above guile?”

The men laughed at that, and Don Ruy clapped him on the shoulder.

“Well reasoned, Chico — and frankly said! We will see the sorcerer at his work before we pass judgement. But the lady will love you little!”

“The less ill luck to me for that!” — retorted the lad. “Her eyes are all for Juan Gonzalvo — and for your Excellency!”

“I am sworn for my soul’s sake to the troth of a silken scarf and a mad woman somewhere in Mexico,” decided Don Ruy whimsically. “If I am to live a celibate, — as our good padre imposes, it is well to cheat myself with a lady love across the border, — even though she gave me no favors beyond a poet’s verse and a battered head.”

“A lady — beat you?” queried Chico in amaze

looking at the strong figure of Don Ruy —“ and though mad, you give to her — faithfulness? ”

“ A faithfulness enforced, lad! ” and his patron chuckled at the amaze in the eyes of the youth. “ Since this crusade allows us no dames for company it is an ill one among us cannot cheat himself into the thought that a gracious doña awaits his return! It is the only protection against such sirens as this one of the loosened braids. To be sure, my goddess of Mexico —(so says the padre)— was only a mad woman — and her servants gave me a scratched skull. Yet, as I am weak and need protection, I carry the scarf of the wench, and call her a goddess and my “ Doña Bradamante ”— in my dreams — that does no harm to any one, and enables me to leave the ladies of the road to Gonzalvo — and the others! Oh — a dream woman is a great rest to the mind, lad,— especially is she so when she affects a wondrous perfume for her silks! ”

He drew the scarf from his pocket and sniffed at it, content to make the lad laugh at the idle fancy, and while he jested thus, Padre Vicente and Gonzalvo gathered much information from Yahn Tsyn-deh. There was a feast, she told them, and all the village was merry, and the time of the visit was a good time.

From the terraces of Kah-po and Povi-whah many eyes watched the coming of the men of iron. But the women who watched were few,— all the maids and even the young wives, had started at once for the sanctuary of the ancient dwellings of the place of Old Fields. There the Woman of the Twilight was awaiting them — much corn and dried meat and beans had been stored there in the hills in waiting for

this time. If fighting was to be done, it should not be a quarrel for wives — as had happened with Coronado's soldiers in Tiguex.

But the white adventurers gave every evidence of the desire to be modest in their demands. They did not even enter the village — nor seek to do so until the place of the camp had been decided upon. Even José was not allowed to precede the others in search of kindred. He and his wife Ysobel watched the terraces, and the courage of the latter grew weak unto tears at the trials possibly behind the silent walls.

The boy Chico reassured her with jestings and occasional whisperings until the woman smiled, though her eyes were wet.

“I shall risk my own precious soul and body beside you,” he stated,—“since my master Don Diego makes me a proxy while we learn if it is safe enough inside those walls for his own sacred bones. He will say the prayers for us until our faces are shown to him again!”

Then he threw himself on the green sward and laughed, and told Ysobel what a fine thing it was to be carefree of a spouse and able to kick up one's heels: —“If it had not been for love and a wedding day you would be happily planting beans in the garden of the nuns instead of following a foreign husband to his own people!”

Don Ruy sauntered near enough to hear the fillip and see the woman dry her eyes.

“Why is it, Dame Ysobel, that you allow this lad to make sport of serious things?” he asked austerely. “He is woefully light minded for so portentous an expedition.”

Ysobel stammered, and glanced at the lad, and dug her toe in the soil, and was dumb.

“You overwhelm her with your high and mighty notice, Excellency,” said the lad coming to her aid. “I will tell you truly — Ysobel has had patience with me since I had the height of your knee — and it is now a custom with her. She lived once in the house of my — relatives. We were both younger — and she had no dreams of wedding a wild Indian — nor I of seeking adventure among savages. She is afraid now that her husband may be blamed — or sacrificed for bringing strangers here — the story of the padre at the well of Ah-ko is not forgotten by her.”

Whereupon Don Ruy told her there should be no harm to José — if he was treated without welcome by the Te-haus he should go back in safety to Mexico to follow his own will in freedom.

The woman murmured thanks and was content, and his excellency surveyed the secretary in silence a bit, until warm color crept into the face of the boy to his own confusion.

“So! — Your independence was because you had a friend at court?” — he observed. “It is fool luck that you, with your girl’s mouth, and velvet cheeks, should get nearest the only woman in camp — and have a secret with her! It is high time you went to confession!”

Upon which he walked away, and left the two together, and Chico lay on the grass and laughed until called to make records of all that might occur between visiting Castilian and the Children of the Sun in their terraced village.

Then, while the men set about the preparations for a resting place, and supper Padre Vicente, with Don Ruy, Chico, Gonzalvo and the two Indians walked quietly to the gate in the great wall.

Many eyes were watching them as they were well aware, and ere they reached the gate, it opened, and the old governor Phen-tza, the war capitan and several of the older men stood there with courteous greeting of hand clasps and invitation.

For the first time since his marriage, Ka-yemo came face to face with Yahn Tsyn-deh, and quick anger flamed in his eyes as he saw her walk close to the side of Juan Gonzalvo who whispered to her — and her answer was a smile from provocative, half closed eyes.

“Yahn!” — the voice of Ka-yemo was not loud, but hard and full of angry meaning. “The other women of your clan have gone to the hills!”

“Let them go,” said the girl insolently — “I do not go! For these strangers I make the talks to the old men, I am the one woman needful in the valley of Pō-sōn-gé!”

It was the hour of her triumph, and Padre Vicente looked at the two keenly. Here was a clash of two savage minds — potent for good or ill.

“To the council I will talk — I am of the people of your father — I am the nearest man — I tell you I forbid you!”

His words fell over each other in anger, and his uncle, the governor, looked at him in reproach — this was not a moment for private quarrel.

“Are you so! — the nearest?” and Yahn showed her teeth. “I do not see it so. I stand near two other men, and am well content!”

She stood between Gonzalvo and Chico, and smiled on the latter, who frankly smiled a response — at that moment Yahn was happy in her defiance. Ka-yemo need not think her forsaken! She had caught fish without a net! To the governor José



was speaking; at once there were signs of delight among the listeners. One of the old men was of his clan — other of his people were alive — and all had thought never to look on him again, it was a good day at Povi-whah!

José showed them his wife, who was greeted with joy, and all proceeded to the court of the village, where, at the house of the governor, they were given cooked corn of the feast, then rolls of bread, and stew of deer meat.

José told of his days as a slave until he was traded into the land of Padre Vicente, and of the great desire of Padre Vicente to bring him back in some lucky year to his people, and also to see with his own eyes the fine land of the Te-huas. He added also that the padre had been very kind, and that he was near to the white god of the men of iron, and strong in medicine of the spirit world.

“We already know that the medicine of the men of iron is strong medicine — and that their gods listen,” said the governor.

“Also Tahn-té the Po-Ahtun-ho makes it seen that the mountain god of this land, and the young god of the Castilian land, were maybe brothers,” — said Po-tzah watching closely the faces of the strangers. “Only your god made talking leaves — and our god gave us only the sunshine to see things for ourselves.”

“Where is this man who tells you that books are made and that false gods are brothers to the true?” inquired Padre Vicente.

“It is the Po-Ahtun-ho,” said José before Yahn could speak. “In Castilian he would be called Cacique. The word in Maya for that ruler is the same word as in Te-hua. It is a very old word. It



is the head of the highest order of the Spirit Things. It is what you call maybe Pope. There are many priests, and many medicine men in each village. There is only one Cacique at one time."

"Which of these men may it be?" inquired Padre Vicente. Yahn it was who answered.

"The Cacique of Povi-whah is not seen by every stranger who walks by the river," she said, and smiled scornfully. "He has come out of the mountain from the dance to the greatest of gods, and after that dance it is not easy to talk to earth people!"

"But — when people come from the far lands of a strange king —"

"That is the business of the governor and of the war capitan," stated Yahn. "He who is named Cacique in this land has not to do with strangers in the valley. His mind is with the Spirit Things. These are the heads of the village of Povi-whah — here also is the governor of Kah-po. They will listen, and learn from your words, and answer you."

"I know words," stated Ka-yemo looking at Don Ruy and the priest. "I can say words — I teach it her," — and he motioned to Yahn, who had dwarfed them all with quick wit and glib speech. "Woman not need in council. I — captain of war can make talk."

"Is not the damsel enlisted as official interpreter for one of us?" queried Don Ruy. "I hold it best that the bond be understood lest the beauty be sent beyond reach — and some of our best men squander time on her trail! Since you, good father, have José, — I will lay claim to this Cleopatra who calls herself by another name, — a fire brand should be kept within vision. Your pardon, Eminence — and you to the head of the council in all else!"

The padre directed his conversation to Ka-yemo, while the secretary set down the claiming of Yahn as the first official act in council of His Excellency Don Ruy de Sandoval.

At the scratching of the quill, his excellency looked over the shoulder of the lad, and read the words, and smiled with his eyes, while his lips muttered dire threats — even to discharging him from office if the records were kept in a manner detrimental.

“Detrimental to whom, my lord?” asked the lad, who saw well the restrained smile. “Your ‘Doña Bradamante’ of the scarf is not to set eyes on these serious pages,—and the Don Diego will certainly exact that I keep record of how near our company falls in the wake of the Capitan Coronado’s — their troubles began about a wife — thus it is well to keep count of fair favorites — and this one who tells you plainly she is no wife, looks promising. Helena of Trois might have had no more charms to her discredit!”

Don Ruy said no more, for he saw that Yahn was straining her ears to catch at their meaning, and they were all losing the words of council. It appeared plain that all the chief men were quite willing that the Po-Ahtun-ho should meet the men of iron as was the padre’s wish — but that no one could command it.

“Through what power is one man more supreme than others? — Yet you say you have no king!”

“No — no king. The Governor is made so each year by the men in council — only one year — then another man — the Governor gets no corn in trade for his time,— and no other thing, but honor, if he is good! Tañ-té has talked to us in council of

kings,— thus we know what a king does. We have no king.”

“ But while a man is the governor does he not rule all the people? ”

“ No — it is not so. He works for the people. He has a right hand man, and a left hand man to talk with of all things. But when it is a big thing of trouble or of need, at that time the council is called, and each man speaks, and in the end each man put a black bean or a white bean in a jar to say for him “ yes ” or to say for him “ no. ” That is how the law is made in all the villages of the Pō-sōn-gé valley. There is no king! ”

“ We are of a surety in a new world if rulers work only for honor — and get not any of that unless they are good! ” decided Don Ruy. “ Make record of that novelty, Chico — our worthy Maestro Diego will find no equal of that rule in all Europe! ”

“ It is well for civilization that it is so! ” decided Juan Gonzalvo. “ Who is to advance the arts and knightly orders except there be Courts of Pontiff and of Royalty? ”

“ And the royalty would be a weak stomached lot if they gained not even extra corn for all their sceptre waving, and royal nods; — eh? But what of this Po-Ahtun-ho — this man who is not king — yet who is supreme? ”

This query was interpreted by José, and after talk and deliberation one of the oldest men made answer.

“ The Po-Ahtun is an order very ancient. When the earth was yet soft, and the rocks wet, and the first people were taught words by the mocking bird, — in that time of our Ancient Fathers, gods spoke

to men — and in that time the order of Po-Ahtun was made. It was made that men could work together on earth for spirit good. When the Mountain God, Po-se-yemo, lived as a man on the earth,— he was the chief priest of the Po-Ahtun order. Po-Ahtun means “The Ruler of Things from the Beginning.” Many men belong to the Po-Ahtun, and learn the prayers, and the songs of the prayers. When the Po-Ahtun-ho walks no more on the earth — and his spirit goes on the twilight trail to Those Above, at that time the brothers of the order name the man who is to be Ruler — and he rules also until he dies.

“Then it seems your Cacique is really a king. You but call him by a different name.”

“No — it is not so. Tahn-té has told the men of Povi-whah what a king is. We have no king. A king fights with knife, and with spear, and he, in his own village, punishes the one who does evil, and orders what men work on the water canal for the fields: — and what men make new a broken wall, or what men clean the court which is the property of all. The king and his men say how all these things then must be done. With the people of Povi-whah the governor does these works and orders them done, and has the man whipped if the work he does is bad work. The chief of war does work as do other men, until the Navahu and the Yutahs have to be driven away; — then it is his work to fight them — he is a warrior, but he does king work in war. These are the men who do king work. But we have no king.”

“By our Lady! — ’tis a nice distinction,” said Don Ruy as the old man ceased, and the men of Tehua nodded their appreciation of the old man’s state-

ment. "Save your quill scratching, Chico — until you are in camp. Their eyes show little favor for the work."

The secretary obediently thrust in his pouch ink horn and quill, and clearly Don Ruy was right, for the bronze faces brightened, and their eyes regarded the young man with approval — the magic of that black water might prove potent and forbidding — never before had it been seen in council.

Padre Vicente had given a cigarro to each man, and while the ancient speaker rested, and José interpreted, all smoked the wonderful smoke from the south, and Chico took occasion to say low to Don Ruy:

"Of all this there is little to make record that is new. Tribes of Mexico have such rules of life. The legends of our people say they came ages ago out of the far North. These are maybe but the children of their brothers who the records say stopped on the way to plant corn, or to hunt, or to rest from travel."

"Records? — Where are such records?" asked Don Ruy derisively, — "in the royal archives of some mud hut?"

The eyes of Chico flashed fire for one instant; the amazed Spaniard was scarce certain of the anger in the secretary's face when it changed, and the boy shrugged his shoulders and lit a cigarro.

"It is true, Excellency, that if any Tescucan manuscripts are yet entire, it can be only because some pagan Indian his risked death and torture to hide them in mud hut or cave in the hills. The first holy archbishop of Mexico made bonfires of Indian books because the beauty of them showed plainly they were

the work of Satan. Without doubt the act earned the bishop an extra jewel for his heavenly crown!"

"Chico! If you pursue such fancies with determination you may end by being a logician and going to hell!" remarked Don Ruy. "I fear you lack a true Christian spirit, my son. But the records?"

"Only stone carved ones are still visible in the land of Anhuac," returned the boy. "The good padres say that they deal with the studies of the stars and planets, and other such speculation invented by Satanic power. When I wanted to know about them I was told that my soul was in danger of the pit."

"And that frightened you?"

"Very much, Excellency:—hence my running away."

Don Ruy was put to it to know whether or not the boy spoke truth. But his odd freaks of thought had many times the effect of an April sunlight on a day of storm. There was no way of calculating what the next moment would bring—but the unexpected was at least a diversion.

The smoking of the men was half over before Padre Vicente again asked José to state that the way of life of the Te-hua people was a thing of interest to the great king whom the Castilians served, and it would please him much to hear more of the Te-hua ruler who was Cacique.

But the old man was silent. He had talked much, he said.

"He thinks—" said Yahn with quick divination,—"that he would like to know of the strangers who are made welcome here:—and why they come far into a country not their own."

"We come because we have heard fair things of



these people," was the reply. "Our god tells us all men are brothers on the earth — we come to find new brothers."

"And if the Navahu come in the night — or the Yutah come many and strong for the corn — whose brother would your god tell you to be at that time?" asked the governor of Kah-po, a tall shrewd faced old man who had not spoken heretofore. Chico showed his teeth in a quickly suppressed smile.

"Our god would tell us," said Padre Vicente with slowness and duly impressive speech — "that our brothers must be the men who are friends with us."

"That is good," agreed the man from Kah-po, and the others said also it was good. Brothers who wore iron coats would be good brothers to have in the time of a war.

"It is as Tahn-té told us of the priests of the white god — they are wise in their thoughts," said the old man who had insisted there was no king in Povi-whah, or any Te-hua village — "all Tahn-té has told us were true words."

"He told us also," said the man from Kah-po — "that the men of iron were not friends to trust."

"They were other men of iron, not these. These men Tahn-té has not yet seen."

The Padre gave no hint that he knew enough of Te-hua words to catch the meaning of their discourse. So long as might be, he would keep that secret, — much might depend upon it.

The name Tahn-té met him at every turn — this was the mysterious Ruler — the hidden Cacique or Po-Ahtun-ho — the one chief who gave them no greeting.

"Ask for me what the name means — the name Tahn-té," he said.

José pointed to a ray of sunlight streaming through the shelter of the vine trellis.

“It means that.”

“And for what cause is a man called Light of the Sun?”

José did not know, but when asked, the ancient man spoke.

“For many reasons, Those Above put the thought of the Sun in the heart of the mother of Tahn-té. Sunlight he was to Povi-whah — you shall see!”

A little boy was carrying on his head a flat basket or tray of reeds, and on it were rolls of bread, and small melons for the feast; at a few words he set down the tray, and darted around a corner — it was a day big in history for him. He was doing the work of his sister who had been sent to the hills — but for this day the work of a girl was great work — it took him so close to the men of iron that his hand could have touched one of them — if his courage had not failed!

He came back with a jar of shining black pottery, and placed it beside the old man, who thrust his hand within and drew out a handful of peaches, dried in the summer sun of a year before.

“This fruit is gathered with prayer each year from the first tree planted by the Summer People in this land,” he said. To Tahn-té was given by the gods, the trees, and the seeds of the trees. Since the time when Po-se-yemo walked on earth, and brought seeds, no new seeds have been born from blossoms here in the land of Te-hua people. When the gods send a man, they also send a Sign. The sign of Tahn-té was the Flute of the Gods, the trees of this fruit, and another fruit; — also a grain of which food is made. It is a good grain. For all of this we make prayers



each year when the fruit is gathered, and when the grain is planted, and for all of this we see why the name of the Sun has been given to Tahn-té. The old men of the Hopi desert say he was born of the falling rain and the light of the moon. We do not know, but his mother knew, and she is wise — and she named him as a child of the Sky would be named.”

The Castilians listened with little enough belief in the god-given Cacique. The peaches and the grain had, without doubt, been brought by Coronado. Juan Gonzalvo said as much, and Yahn told it eagerly to the council, but the old men shook their heads.

The trees were a year old from the seed when Tahn-té carried them on his back from the heart of the desert, and Capitan Coronado had not yet seen the villages of the Pō-sōn-gé, called by him the Rio Grande.

“Then:—” said Padre Vicente —“it is because he found new seeds that he is above the cares of the daily life? I can bring many strange seeds from the gardens of Europe or Africa. For that would I be a son of the moon and the stars?”

“May be so,—” said the old man,—“and maybe so the gods would not need a son on that day.” He inhaled the fragrant smoke and went on to make clear to these people of outlands some little gleam of the mysteries circling holy things,—“You must be born in a good year — and a good time in that year — the trail of the visitors of the sky must be climbing up — up!”

“The trail of the visitors in the sky?” The Padre looked with quickness into the bronze faces.

“He means the planets — the wandering stars,” said Chico. “The Mexican tribes also watch them

when a child is born. A god lives in each one — so they think!”

“Necromantic fancies devised by the Evil one!” stated the priest and crossed himself to ostracise such powers of the demon from the circle. The rest devoutly imitated him, and the Te-hua men watched with interest the men of iron making their “medicine” against the celestial bodies on the descending trail.—That slight automatic gesture in unison proved even a sort of bond between them and the dusky old orator; — he could plainly see that the signs in the heavens were earnestly regarded by the white strangers. That showed they were wise to read the true things; for that he could tell them more.

“The maid who was mother to Tahn-té is named The Woman of the Twilight. When little, the spirit of her broke in two — and she went into the Land of Twilight. Her parents could not believe that she would no more walk on the earth. They went to the Po-Ahtun — they sealed her to that order — so it was, and the medicine prayer of the Po-Ahtun brought back the breath to her. But when a spirit goes to the Land of the Twilight, it does not come back at once — not all at once! The gods are strong and can do things. When they want to take her again and teach her hidden things — they take her! One Star visitor in the sky took her when she became woman, and hid her behind all the hills until her child moved,— then, in the far desert where the Sun Father is the great god, there in that place she was laid on the sands beside a well that the child be earth child like other men. That is how it was, and she knows why the earth child was called the child of the Great Star, and of the Sky.”

Yahn listened eagerly — and with sulky frown — Neither she or Ka-yemo had ever before heard this account of the Woman of the Twilight and her son. The magic of it made her feel sullenly helpless. This then was the reason why no face smiled in scorn when Tahn-té would come sometimes from mesa, or cañon, bearing his mother in his arms as one would bear a little child: — all the elders knew she had been seeking the trail to the Land of Twilight where long ago she had found a god, and lost herself.

“And this woman tells to wise men a fable like this — and is given their faith?” asked Padre Vicente, while Juan Gonzalvo muttered that the savages had stolen the truth of the Mother of God, and should be made pay dear in good time, for the sacrilege!

“The mouth of the woman was sealed,” stated the narrator. “But the wise men of the desert sent men to tell the Te-hua people of the magic of the woman. And the years and the work of her son made good the stories of the Hopi men.”

“We have here no mere juggling pretender,” remarked Padre Vicente — “a Cacique whose mother establishes family connection with the stars in the sky, could in truth have papal power among these heathen! With all their wise looks, and careful speech, these old men are not the influence we have to win for progress in this land: — this man who would place the false gods above the true God is the man to be won.”

“Or to be conquered!” said Juan Gonzalvo whose wonder was that the priest had patience with their maudlin tales of village officers, or brats born

of magic and the moon,—“If I might speak — Eminence?”

“Speak — my son.”

“These people have sent their women away, and have told your reverence only of their own things of pride. Of their real king they give us no sight. In the New Spain of the South these under-men would be given few presents of value, and not so much of your gracious time.”

He spoke rapidly with a wary eye on the interpreters,—only José could follow the swifter speech.

“Capitan Gonzalvo gives the word of a soldier, Padre,” remarked Don Ruy, “and it may be a true word. Why not give the gifts, and let us see somewhat of the feast from which we have won these dignitaries?”

Padre Vicente was agreed, and spoke a few words to José who departed with his wife for the camp. The priest gave tobacco, and while the old men smoked the new medicine, he talked to Ka-yemo of the one religion, and the one God, and that the great new god gave the command to his priests to go into the far lands and carry the light of the faith to his children who live in darkness.

Ka-yemo interpreted, and the old men nodded their heads as if to say that was all good — but it was not told for the first time, and Don Ruy could have sworn he saw the governor of Kah-po smile at another man — as one who would question whether they should be considered as children. Don Ruy did not know that one man of Kah-po had been among the two hundred human torches making the night bright at Tiguex by order of advocates of that same new and holy god.

The summers and winters since that time had not made it all forgotten in the land of the great river. To the Indian mind in general, it was plain to be seen that the strong god of the men of iron required that many victims be made sacrifice at one time. The gods of the Te-hua people asked but one sacrifice at one time, and the knife of flint was very sharp, and found quickly the heart, and the spirit self was sent quickly and with prayers over the trail of the dusk to the Light beyond the light.

Ka-yemo alone seemed enchained by the words of the priest, as he heard again the words and phrases belonging to that time of which he still dreamed in the night, and awoke startled and alert.

Yahn watched him with a little frown. She did not know that the strongest power ever impressed on his boyish mind, had been the power of the white conquerors. He had through the years grown away from its influence, but at sight of the robe, and the cord, and the shiny black beads, it all came back. He felt the honor of the fact that the priest of that strong god was looking at, and talking only to him: — Ka-yemo!

His pride made his eyes kindle and he was very handsome. Don Ruy wondered why Yahn, his own official interpreter, looked at him sideways with disapproval.

José returned with his hands full of the gifts for which he had been sent. There was one for each of the men in the group, and the people of the village pressed close around the door to see them given away.

Then Padre Vicente stood up and offered to the governor of Povi-whah a rosary like his own, but of brown beads.

“They tell me that to you requests are made as prayers are made, and that from you they are given again to the Cacique for decision. We present our request and our gift. Tell him the gift is one kings have been graciously pleased to wear, and that our request is that he meet us at an early hour, that we may speak in kindness of many things.”

“Tahn-té — you call Cacique — is not yet speaking with people out of his order,” said Phen-tza, the governor. “But this can go, and the message can go, and on another day Tahn-té may ask you to go in his door.”

Then there were clasping of hands, and friendly smiles and the visitors were free to go or wander about the village, and watch the greetings of José and the comrades of his boyhood. His wife Ysobel was caressed and admired by the ancient women of the tribe, and a garland of flowers placed on her head. At sun rise in the morning she was to present herself at the door of her new relatives for the baptism of adoption, and then she would be given also a Te-hua name.

Padre Vicente and the Castilians were offered an empty abode outside the wall. Despite the scowls of the Ka-yemo Yahn delighted to linger close as might be to Juan Gonzalvo while they all walked to inspect it. Then the Castilian camp with its wondrous animals was to be visited by the governor and other Te-hua men, and great good feeling prevailed. The wise ecclesiastical head of the cavalcade had asked nothing but gracious thoughts, and the gifts he brought had been good gifts.

Don Ruy with the secretary, let who might judge of the new camp, while he wandered in some surprise past the door ways decked with feast day garlands —



and above certain ones were pendent bits of turquoise as if for ceremonial marking of some order or some clan, and instead of the blanket or arras there were long reeds strung, and at the end of each string a beaten twist of copper twinkling like bells when stirred by any one entering or leaving the dwelling.

The dwelling of the dove cotes had a tiny inside verandah, and one of the curious robes woven of twisted rabbit skins was laid over a beam. Great meal jars stood along the wall, and beside them were four melons, four full grained heads of the bearded wheat, also four peaches and four pears. They were arranged on a great tray of woven reeds, and placed without the doorway to the right. The careful arrangement gave all significance of an offering of the first fruits on an altar. All the other homes had feasting and laughter and the sound of gaiety and much life; at every other door many smiling faces of old women and children met them, and the rolls of feast bread were offered, or bowls of cooked corn. But here all was silence, only the doves fluttering above gave life to the place. The reeds at the entrance hung straight and still. This entrance faced the south, but there was another towards the east and the river. The mysterious island of stone called the Mesa of the Hearts, loomed dark across the water and a beaten path led from that east door to the water's edge. Don Ruy could see from the bank that a canoe was there made from a log hollowed by careful burnings.

The silent corner where the doves fluttered, held his attention and he returned to it. Chico it was who stepped close to the rabbit skin robe, and saw beside the melons, the ears of wheat, and the yet green, unripe fruit of the pears and the peaches.

The dried peaches in the jar shown them by the old Te-hua man had not given either of them a second thought, but the two fruits grown from trees, and the bearded wheat of the Mediterranean arranged in the basket with the care given a sacred offering, was a different matter. Don Ruy noted the staring eyes and parted lips of the boy, and silently stepped nearer at a gesture.

Then they stared in each others eyes as men who look on death unexpected, or witchcraft — or some of the experiences of this life for which there are no words, and Don Ruy laid his hand on the shoulder of the lad, and drew him in silence out of the shadow of the roofed entrance.

“It is good to be where the bright sun shows things as they are,” he decided. “The shadows and silence of that place tied the tongue. How feel you now, Lad, as to the story of Don Teo the Greek and the seeds that were given to the maid as sacred medicine?”

“But — the man died — so says the padre — and the woman —”

Then they fell silent and each was thinking back over the trails of the desert, and their company of thirty men — and the care needed to find the way alive with all the help of provisions and of beasts.

“The woman had a greater journey and a more troublous one,” — said Don Ruy. “These are clearly the fruits of Spanish gardens, but in some other way have they reached this land. It was made plain that the place of the palms where he left her was unknown leagues towards the western sea, and that the maid could only die in the desert.”

“He crossed this river in his travels before he saw the Indian maid of medicine charms,” reminded



the secretary. "Do you not recall the journeys with the war people? He may have bestowed upon others the seeds of other lands."

Don Ruy drew a long breath, and then laughed.

"By our Lady!—You bring joy with that thought!" he said heartily.—"I made sure the Devil was alive and was working ahead on our trail when my eyes were startled by the offering of fruit and grain! You looked as if it might be your own hair was rising to stand alone! We are but children in the dark, Chico, and there come times when we have fear. But your thought is the right thought, lad. Of a certainty he crossed this country; that there is no record is not so strange a thing—he was only another brown savage among many!"

They spoke together of the strangeness of their findings in the village—and its exceeding good arrangement with ladders to draw above in case of attack, and only one house—that of the doves and the fruit—into which one could walk from the court. All the others were as in the other villages—terraces, and the first terrace had doors only in the roof so that a blank adobe wall faced the court and the curious. Each great house with rooms by the score, and its height from two to five stories, was the home of many, and a fort in case of need.

While they commented on these things, two men came running swiftly through the gate from the Castilian camp. One was José, and it was Po-tzah who ran beside him. They went straight to the house of the dove cote, and José waited without while, after a few eager hurried words, the other slipped behind the twinkling arras of river reeds and shells.

“What now?” asked Don Ruy coming up, and Jose showed fear at first and then spoke.

“It is your own horse to which it has happened, Excellency,” he said. “The padre say it is not the fault of any one, for the bush is high there, and who could see through them? But it is the snake — the one you say has the castanets in the tail, and it has put the poison in the foot of your horse!”

Don Ruy swore an oath that was half a prayer, and the pert secretary did the first thing that was familiar since he was seen with the company — he laid his hand on Don Ruy’s shoulder and felt that the horse lost was as a brother lost, and Chico had a fancy of his own to caress it, and even burnish the silver of his bridle.

“And — why come you here to this house?”

“Here is the one man who knows the ways of the snake — if he is not in prayer they think he may come — but not any man can know what the Po-Ahtun-ho may do — and the horse beautiful may die on our first day in Povi-whah!”

But the reeds with their copper and shell tassels tinkled, and Don Ruy looked to see the old medicine man of spells and charms come forth.

He saw a man young as himself and more tall. Almost naked he was, with only the white banda in which was a blue bird’s feather — the girdle and moccasins. One glance he gave Don Ruy and his companion, bent his head ever so little in acknowledgement of their presence, and then ran beside his friend Po-tzah with the easy stride of the trained runner. Whatever his knowledge of the snake might be, he waited for no words, but moved quickly.

Many men were about the animal and Don

Diego had bound tightly a cord of rawhide about the knee, and water was being poured on the foot. But Te-hua and Castillian alike stood aside as the swift nude figure came among them — and without word or question went straight to the hurt animal.

The other natives had approached the four-footed creatures with a certain curiosity — if not awe, and there had been more than a little scattering of prayer meal when the mules were hobbled. The braying of one of them had caused terror in the hearts of the older men.

But this man took no heed of the groups of men or of animals. He led the injured steed out of the pool of water, and with a knife of the black flint cut the bandage — to the extreme distaste of Don Diego, who had been chief surgeon.

Then, still without words to the people, he did a strange thing, for he knelt there on the ground and leaned his shoulder against the leg of the horse, and slipped slowly, slowly down until his cheek touched the pastern, and his strong slender hands slid downward again and again over the leg of the animal while his lips moved as though in whispered speech to the ground itself.

No man spoke for a long time, but some of the elder men cast prayer meal that it fell on the kneeling savage and on the horse, and the animal reached down and rubbed its nose on his shoulder as if he had been its well known and long beloved master.

Curious were all the Castilians, but Juan Gonzalvo, who had spent time in speech with Yahn Tsyn-deh, was more than curious. Like a tiger cat above its prey he stood frowning at the silent "medicine" of the naked worker in devilish arts.

Then the kneeling man arose and spoke in Castilian.

“It is good,” he said. “It is done,” but he did not lift his eyes from the ground. The task of some prayer was yet unfinished — and he turned again towards his home and walked swiftly and the horse followed him until Juan Gonzalvo caught it and gave careful heed to the stricken foot, and could see no sign where the swelling should be.

“It is big medicine,” said the Te-hua men. “Now our brothers, the strangers have seen that our god is strong and our men to work are strong.”

“It is sorcery of the devil,” said Juan Gonzalvo. “Some medicine he had in his hands — some medicine we could not see. No physician in all Europe has skill to cure by such magic. Is it like that a naked savage should know more than the learned professors?”

“No: — it is not to be believed,” assented Don Ruy — “but thanks to the Saints it is true for all that! — and that silent youth is after all Tahn-té the Cacique!”

“No —” said Padre Vicente with decision — “the sooner that office is no longer his the sooner do we arrive at that which brought us here. That is Tahn-té the worker in accursed red magic — Tahn-té the sorcerer!”