KATHARINE LEE BATES

IN SUNNY SPAIN WITH PILARICA AND RAFAEL

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Содержание

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FOREWORD

The verses in this story, with the exception of the two snatches, in chapters 6 and 14, of ballads of the Cid, I have translated directly out of Spanish folk-song. Some of these, especially riddles, and others, especially those sung in the circle-dances, have previously appeared in *The Churchman* and in my *Spanish Highways and Byways* and are used here by the courtesy of *The Churchman* publishers and of the Messrs. Macmillan Company.

Katharine Lee Bates.

The Scarab. June 3, 1913.

I
PILARICA IN THE MOORISH GARDEN

AT last, at last, that tiresome stint of embroidery was done. The threads, no longer white, had tangled so often under the impatient tugs of those rosy little fingers that it was fully half an hour later than usual before Pilarica could jump up from the threshold, run back through the house to Tia Marta, display those finished three inches of "labors" and plead:

"Tia Marta, with your kind permission I will now go out to play."

Tia Marta was stooping over a great, open chest in the inner room whose only other furniture was a wide, low bedstead and two canvas cots. All the family slept there except Pilarica's big brother, Rodrigo, who was a student in the Institute of Granada and so, being a person of dignity, had the curtained box-bed in the kitchen. This outer room, like the bedroom behind it, was all of stone and so dim that the light from the doorway showed only a glimmer of copper and pewter on the side where the cooking was done. The bedroom had a window, so narrow that it seemed hardly more than a slit cut in the thick stone of the wall. There was no glass in the window and there were no rugs nor carpets on the cold, tiled floors.

Tia Marta, huddled over the big chest in the duskiest corner of all, could not have seen the embroidery well, even though Pilarica's eagerness thrust it close against the squinting red eyes; but she scolded, for Tia Marta enjoyed scolding, quite as sharply as if every moist little stitch had been measured and found wanting.

"Worse and worse! The very gypsies would be ashamed to wear it. The donkeys would bray at it. What is to become of a girl born without the needle-gift? The saints take pity! But get you out into the sunshine, child, and play! This house is as dark as a wolf's mouth. Out of doors with you!"

And Tia Marta thrust the strip of linen back to Pilarica with such a jerk that the needle flew off the thread, slid to the floor and, after a merry hop or two, hid itself in a crack. This was fun for the needle, but it kept Pilarica away from the garden for ten minutes more while her small palms rubbed over the worn, uneven tiles in anxious search. But as soon as she knelt down and prayed to Santa Rita, the clever saint who can find anything that is lost, the needle gave her knee a saucy prick and consented, after its run-away frolic, to be stuck into the cloth again. For, you see, the needle had been working hard, too, and wanted its bit of holiday as much, perhaps, as Pilarica wanted hers.

But the loss of those ten minutes out of her golden afternoon was a sore trial to the little girl and she dashed like a tiny whirlwind through the house to fling herself, sobbing and laughing both at once, into the arms of Grandfather. He sat,

white-haired and dreamy-eyed, his guitar on the mosaic bench beside him, under the olive-tree before the door. It was so comforting to feel the tender clasp of the old, trembling arms and to hear the slow and broken but still sweet old voice that had crooned over Pilarica since her earliest memory.

"What's this? What's this? Dew on my red rosebud? Hush, Heart of Honey, hush! I have a new riddle for you.

" 'Little glass boxes
That sometimes leak,
But open and shut
Without a squeak.' "

Pilarica promptly pointed her two forefingers at her still tearful eyes.

"That is easy," she said, slipping to her knees upon the ground and leaning against the end of the bench. "Please tell me one, a bad, rude one, about a needle. I do hate needles so."

Grandfather did not have to think long, for he was the wisest man in Spain, as all the children on the Alhambra hill would have told you, and he knew more rhymes and riddles than all the professors in all the universities and all the preachers in all the pulpits put together. So presently he began to repeat in the soft, singsong tone that always soothed Pilarica like the murmur of running water:

" 'I have only one eye, like the beggar who sits

In the great church porch at Cadiz;
My temper is sharp, and yet I am
A favorite with the ladies.'

Will this do?" he asked. "For there is another, and I see that just now the needle is no favorite at all with my little lady here."

"I would like, please, to hear the other," replied Pilarica promptly, for surely one could not know too many riddles, especially about anything so vexatious as a needle.

And Grandfather, after letting his fingers wander for a minute over the strings of the guitar to refresh his memory, chanted this other:

" 'I'm little, but do me no wrong,
For my temper is sharp and spry;
I'm not a man, but my beard is long,
And it grows right out of my eye.
I'm as small as a spear of wheat in spring,
And yet it is I who dress the King.' "

"One more, dear Grandfather, if you will do me the favor," coaxed the child.

"One more," assented Grandfather, lightly kissing the red carnation which Pilarica, like a true little Andalusian, had tucked into her rippling mass of soft dark hair. "One more, but not about the needle this time.

" 'O bright long paths to Fairytown!
What shining paths do I mean?
They are not gray, nor black, nor brown,
Nor blue, nor white, nor green.' "

Dear me! What paths *did* he mean? Pilarica sprang to her feet and looked about her on a scene of wonderful beauty. For the two gloomy rooms in which the family ate and slept were all that remained of an old Moorish palace, once as dazzling in its strange and delicate splendor as if it had been carven out of moonlight and jeweled by the frost. Time had destroyed those silvery walls and towers, those airy arches and columns, but it had dealt gently with the lordly pleasure-garden, which only grew lovelier and lovelier through the centuries of neglect. When the Christian armies, long ago, drove the grave, dark-faced, turbaned Moors down from the Alhambra hill, out of Spain, and back over the narrow strip of sea to the north coast of Africa, the household that had to flee from this fair home must have turned at the garden gate and sighed as they looked their last on their lost Eden. Now the roses clambered over the broken marble basins of the seven fountains, but the sparkling jets of water were as limpid as ever and, when they were all playing, Pilarica could bathe under the spray of a different fountain every day in the week.

What paths did he mean? "Not gray, nor black, nor brown," for there were no hues so dull as these in this rainbow wilderness. "Nor blue, nor white"? There had been walks of sky-tinted porcelain and creamy marble once, and other walks of many-

colored tiles, set in patterns of stars and crescents and circles, but the myrtle hedges had sent out rambling sprays of yellow blossoms to clamber over these, and fallen orange flowers and jasmine petals, acacia blooms and drifting leaves of all sorts helped with their fragrant litter to hide the pavement of those winding ways. "Nor green"? There were trees upon trees in the garden, solemn cypresses and soaring palms, magnolias with their great, sweet blossoms, cedars with level boughs, banana trees and lemon and citron and pomegranate, oleanders with their clusters of snowy flowers, and the leafless coral tree, blooming in brilliant scarlet. Only the birds, whose wings went flashing from one beckoning branch to another, knew how many, many green paths there were amidst the leafage of those marvellous boughs. And while Pilarica was still gazing with happy eyes right up and away into that waving world of twinkling sprays and glowing blossoms, a sudden ray of sunlight struck across a pink-plumed almond and slanted down to Pilarica's swinging feet.

"Sunbeams! Yellow paths!" cried Pilarica, clapping her hands.

The sunbeam danced a little, just a little, but enough to awake in those small sandalled feet an irresistible desire to run and play. So the child slipped away from Grandfather's knee and left him to doze again, one withered hand still straying on the strings of his guitar and calling out notes of dreamy music even as he slept.

Pilarica tripped along by a hedge of boxwood, in which Rodrigo had amused himself by cutting out, some five feet apart, queer shapes of peacocks and lions and eagles. To each of these

she gave a swift caress in passing, for they seemed, in a way, like playmates, and their rustling green faces were very pleasant to kiss. A shade of anxiety was gathering in her eyes, for her other brother, Rafael, was a seeker for hid treasure. The boy had often annoyed some ancient snail in its hermitage and sent the lizards scampering like flashes of green light by his groping about the bottom of cracked marble cisterns and flower-choked baths, but he had never yet found any riches of the Moors, not one alabaster jar full of rubies and emeralds nor even a single nest of pearls as large as hen's eggs, – no, not although he had dug by moonlight with a spade dipped three times in the Sultana Fountain and rubbed dry with bunches of pungent rosemary. Perhaps Rafael might have been more successful if the Sultana had been less dilapidated. She was now merely a slender foot poised on the basin rim and a white arm clasping the central shaft of porphyry. All else had been broken away ages since, but this mainly missing Sultana was none the less the lady of Rafael's homage and he would not allow Pilarica, never once, to kiss that uptilted marble heel.

But although Rafael was not fortunate in finding the buried treasure of the Moors, he was always coming upon buried treasure of Pilarica's, to her great indignation and concern. All over the garden were hidden her little hoards of such childish wealth as Tia Marta's well-worn broom would send spinning out of the house, – fragments of ruddy pottery, bits of sunrise-hued mosaic, choice feathers shed by the garden birds, feathers that

might some day be fashioned into a fan, beads and ribbons that had come traveling up the Alhambra hill in Rodrigo's pocket when there chanced to be a fair going on in Granada.

So Pilarica's eyes, those great, changeful Andalusian eyes, that gleam like jewels but are in color nearest to the deep purple of pansies, grew dark, like dusky velvet, with the fear that Rafael might have found her latest gift from Big Brother, her castanets. Stepping softly from one broken piece of paving to another, along a mere thread of a path that wound in and out of the scented shrubbery, the child came to what had once been a summer-house with silken awnings, enclosed by a low marble colonnade. The blue sky roofed it now and only one of those graceful white columns was still standing and still – O happy Pilarica! – keeping safe watch and ward over the little yellow clappers, adorned with red tassels, which had been buried at its foot under a drift of perfumed leaves and petals. Pilarica caught them to her heart, those shells of hollowed wood, with a gasp of joy. Running her thumbs through the loops of red cord that bound each pair together, she flung her arms above her head and, beating out with the middle finger a sharp, clicking music from the castanets, began to dance. It was a wonderful sight to see Pilarica dance, whirling about and about, her feet as light as her heart, in the circle of the summer-house, but there was only one column to look on, and he was not greatly impressed, for he was old and weather-worn and tired and, besides, he had seen grand Moorish ladies, with castanets of ivory and pearl, dancing very much like

Pilarica, hundreds of Aprils ago.

II
THE MAGIC CAP

"WHOOP!" sounded suddenly from over Pilarica's head, and a red Turkish fez came flying down from the high garden-wall, alighting neatly on the top of the solitary column. At the edge of that wall a sturdy, square-chinned boy, by way of getting up his courage for the leap, was chanting an old nursery rhyme:

"There was a Señor Don Cat.
In a chair of gold he sat.
In a suit of silk he was clad,
And pointed shoes he had.
His Godfather came and said:
'If you would like to wed
A beautiful Moorish tabby,
Take a walk on the roof of the abbey.'
But when he saw her there,
He tumbled into the air,
And on the cloister stones
Arrived with broken bones."

Thump! The boy was sitting on the ground, in the very center of the summer-house, vigorously rubbing those portions of his body which had suffered most in the adventure; but as Pilarica, with the deference due to an athlete as well as to a brother, sprang

up and handed him his cap, he flung it on, cocked it jauntily and shook back the gilt tassels that were tickling his ears.

"This is a magic cap and, when I wear it, I am anybody I choose to be," announced the new-comer, somewhat breathlessly. "I am now," he continued, still sitting on the ground but waving his arms suggestively, "Rafael the Archangel."

"You are welcome to your house, my lord Archangel," faltered Pilarica, not forgetting her manners, but holding her precious castanets tightly clasped behind her back.

"What have you there?" queried Rafael, pulling off his hempen sandals and anxiously inspecting the soles of his feet.

Poor little Pilarica, into whom courtesy had been instilled as the first of all the virtues, winked hard, but held out the castanets toward her brother.

"They are at your service," she faltered. But Rafael, too, could practise the Andalusian graces when he had a mind.

"They are very well placed where they are," he returned affably in the set phrase proper to the occasion and, giving his gay fez a twirl, he added: "I am not the Archangel any more, but the high and mighty Moor Abdorman Murambil Xarif, master of this palace. You are my Christian captive and will now dance for me."

"But I do not want to be a Christian captive," protested Pilarica.

"Would you rather be a dog of an infidel, a follower of false Mahound?" demanded Rafael, in a tone of shocked reproach. "If

so, I shall have to sweep you into the sea."

"But ar'n't you a dog of an infidel, too, since you are a Moor?" asked Pilarica in that keen way of hers, which her brother often found disconcerting.

Rafael caught off his red cap with a pettish gesture and tossed it aside.

"Your tongue is too full of words, Pilarica," he grumbled. "It is unseemly to answer back. I am a year older than you. What's more, I am a boy and you are a girl. As Tia Marta says, the fingers of the hand are not equal."

Pilarica spread out the little brown fingers of her right hand and considered them so seriously that Rafael was encouraged to go on.

"Besides, I have heard Rodrigo say that a woman who speaks Latin always comes to a bad end."

"But I do not speak Latin," pleaded Pilarica. "Isn't Latin the gori-gori-goo that the priests sing in the church? I do not see why anyone should learn it, for Grandfather says that in heaven the angels all speak Spanish."

"Of course they do," assented Rafael proudly. "Spanish is the most beautiful language that ever was spoken, just as the Spaniards are the best and bravest people on the earth."

"Who are the other people on the earth? Are they all followers of false Mahound, like the Moors?" asked Pilarica.

Rafael frowned. There never was a girl like Pilarica for asking inconvenient questions.

"Child," he said, looking as ancient and impressive as any eight-year-old could, "did Grandfather ever tell you the story of Juan Cigarron?"

"Not yet," replied Pilarica meekly, "but it would give me great pleasure to hear it, if you please."

"Grandfather tells me many more stories than he tells you," boasted Rafael. "You are all for riddles and verses, but he and I talk together, like men, of the affairs of the world. Juan Cigarron, who lived a long, long while ago, before you, and even I, had been born, made believe that he was a great magician and could see anything, even if it was hidden in the very depths of the earth, unless, to be sure, there was a blue cloth wrapped around it."

"Why blue?" asked Pilarica.

"Why not?" retorted Rafael, quite angrily. "Will you listen to my story, or will you be forever chattering? The King sent for Juan Cigarron and asked him many questions and, by great good luck, he was able to answer every one. Then the King, for a reward, promised to grant him whatever he might wish, even though it were the gold crown on the King's head, but Juan Cigarron did not wish for the crown. He wished that His Majesty might never ask him anything again. Oh! And that reminds me," exclaimed Rafael, jumping up quite forgetful of his bumps and bruises and tossing on his cap once more, "that the Gypsy King is to tell me my fortune this very afternoon."

Pilarica clasped her hands in silent appeal, and her eyes grew so starry with hope that Rafael, already beyond the limits of the

summer-house, looked back, swaying doubtfully on one foot.

"Tia Marta does not allow you to go over to the gypsy quarter," he objected.

"Nor you, either," was on the tip of Pilarica's tongue, but she wisely bit it back, urging:

"The Gypsy King will not have gone home so early. He will be waiting near the Alhambra, sitting on the fountain-steps, looking for tourists who may buy his photograph for a peseta. And besides," she added with innocent tact, "Tia Marta knows that I am safe anywhere with you."

Rafael swaggered.

"Of course you are," he announced grandly. "You are my little sister, and I, even though a bull should charge upon me, would stand before you as strong as the columns in the temple of Solomon. Come on! I will ask Tia Marta if you may go with me."

So the children raced gleefully across the garden, dodging in and out among geraniums, heliotrope and fuchsias that had grown into great shrubs like trees, but paused at the fretted Moorish arch that now performed the humble office of their kitchen door, to see what Grandfather was doing. The old man, whom the circle of the years had brought back near to childhood, was playing happily with a snail that found itself halted in some important journey of its own by his protruding foot.

"A riddle! a riddle for the snail!" coaxed Pilarica, throwing herself down on the ground to lift the wee round traveller over that meddlesome mountain; and Grandfather, after strumming a

minute on his guitar, recited:

> "I was roaming in the meadow and there, upon my soul,
> I met a little mansion out for a stroll.
> The dignified Lord Mayor was sitting in his hall.
> I said: 'Come take a walk with me.' He answered: 'Not at all.
> My office is so serious I never leave my chair,
> But the city hall goes with me when I need to take the air.' "

Meanwhile Rafael, who felt himself quite too grown-up for riddles, had dived into the darkness of the house, whence he soon came scampering out, followed by the shrill tones of Tia Marta.

"The Gypsy King, indeed! And what sort of a king is that? Everyone is as God has made him, and very often worse."

"But may Pilarica go?" called Rafael.

"Ask her grandfather. Am I a donkey, to bear all the burdens of this household?"

"May I go, Grandfather?" teased Pilarica. The old man nodded at least twenty times and, catching up the word *donkey*, struck with his quavering voice into a popular tune:

> "Little I am, but everywhere
> Blows and burdens I have to bear.
> *Haw-hee!*
> "That is why my voice of long protest
> Has grown to be bigger than all the rest
> Of me."

"*Haw-hee!*" echoed Rafael, with such a good imitation of a bray that a genuine ass made sonorous answer from the highroad beyond.

"Grandfather says I may go," cried Pilarica joyfully into the arched doorway.

"Bah!" responded Tia Marta. "His heart is softer than a ripe fig."

But she did not take back the permission, and Pilarica had the rare delight of an excursion with Rafael outside the garden.

Half ashamed of his condescension, the boy did not spare her, but tore at his full speed along the dusty road, between giant hedges of aloes, with their blue, sworded leaves, and lances tipped with yellow blossoms, so that it was a very hot, panting little girl who arrived, hardly a minute behind him, at the fountain on whose steps was enthroned the Gypsy King.

This was a very splendid personage indeed, with his high, peaked hat sparkling all over with pendants of colored glass that flashed back the sun like crown jewels. His slashed jacket was wondrously embroidered and spangled and his broad sash was of scarlet silk. Even his trousers and stockings looked as if he had been wading in a sunset. Smiling on Pilarica, he drew a bright cup from his wallet and, leaning toward the fountain, filled it with water that could not have looked more deliciously fresh and cold if the cup had been made of purest silver instead of gypsy tin. But thirsty as she was, the little Andalusian maiden handed the cup back to the giver.

"After you, please," she said as sweetly as if her throat were not almost choked with the white dust.

The Gypsy King bowed with much majesty and touched the cup to his lips, but then she insisted on passing it to Rafael, who made short work of draining its contents to the last drop. He did not fail, however, to fill it again for his sister, so that, at last, Pilarica found herself seated on the lowest step, at the feet of the fortune teller, quite cool and comfortable.

But the picturesque old gypsy, although he could not help being kind to Pilarica, was in a gloomy mood. He had sold only one of his photographs all day long, and that to a rude young foreigner – we hope it was not an American – who had laughed at his kingship to his face and spun him the silver coin so carelessly that it had rolled into a crevice of the stone work and joined the lost treasures of the Alhambra. And well the poor old gypsy knew that, however much he might pose as a king in his flaunting hat and gaudy jacket by day, with twilight he must make his way back to the rows of human dens that burrow into the hillside across the river Darro. And there, as soon as he should draw back the dirty flap of cloth from the entrance of his own cave, his swarthy young wife, Xarifa, would demand the amount of his day's earnings and, when he confessed to an empty wallet, would fly into such a passion that the heavy silver earrings would pound against her raven hair and every flounce on her bright orange petticoat would seem to bristle with rage. He could tell his own fortune, for that evening, only too well, – a shame-faced

old fellow perched on a stool in the corner, trying with trembling hands to mend a cooking tin or a piece of harness, while Xarifa's furious voice went on and on, until at last he should be suffered to fall asleep on the heap of ragged sheepskins that served him for a royal couch.

So although on yesterday, when he had sold three photographs and had three pesetas jingling in his purse, the Gypsy King had promised to tell Rafael's fortune as an act of friendship, to-day he was stubbornly silent, holding out his palm to be crossed with silver. Rafael's flush met the red edges of his fez. The only silver he had was a little watch and chain that his father had given him when, three years ago, that gallant naval engineer left his children, whose mother had just died, in the care of Grandfather and Tia Marta and sailed away, under the red and yellow flag of Spain, to do his part for king and country. No one guessed how deeply Rafael loved that absent father, the hero of all his dreams, but the boy had even more than the usual share of Spanish pride and, with a sudden gulp that was not far from a sob, he dropped the watch and chain into that greedy palm.

And he could make nothing of the fortune, after all. The Gypsy King, muttering strange words that only gypsies know, bent forward and with his staff traced rude figures in the sand, – a train of mules, a cockle-shell, a battle-ship; but suddenly he lifted his staff and touched it lightly to Rafael's magic cap.

"That is your fortune," he declared. "It will turn toads into nightingales and stones into bread. Don't give that away, my little

gentleman, even to the gypsies."

III
FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES

THE eyes of the Gypsy King began to glitter like jet beads. He had caught sight of an omnibus toiling up the Alhambra hill, and after the first a second, and after the second a third. Tourists! A party of foreign tourists! A host of golden, gullible tourists! Ah, Xarifa would be pleased with him, after all. She would toss him off a panful of crisp fritters for supper and then sit with him in the mouth of their cave, enjoying all the gypsy jest and music. With surprising nimbleness he climbed to the top step of the fountain, and there he stood, brandishing his hat high above his head and bowing and beckoning and twisting and bowing again until Pilarica turned quite giddy just from watching him.

"Come away!" ordered Rafael, tugging at her hand, and she followed her brother to the ivied wall beneath that bell-tower on whose top the first cross was lifted after the Christians had taken the Alhambra from the Moors. Here Rafael busied himself in gathering together a few smooth stones, as much in the shape of Spanish rolls as he could find, and arranging them in a row.

"Count out!" he commanded Pilarica, and the little girl, dancing up and down the line as she sang, proceeded to touch with an airy foot one stone and then another and another in turn.

"The garden of our house it is
The funniest garden yet,
For when it rains and rains and rains,
The garden it is wet.
And now we bow,
Skip back and then advance,
For who know how
To make a bow
Know how to dance.
AB – C – AB – C
DE – FG – HI – J.
If your worship does not love me,
Then a better body may.
AB – C – AB – C,
KL – MN – OP – Q.
If you think you do not love me,
I am sure I don't love you."

Before the song was ended, Rafael had clapped his magic cap over the stone designated by Q and stood, with red lips firmly pressed together, abiding results.

"Sing something else, Pilarica," he entreated, "or else I cannot, cannot wait."

And Pilarica, with a quick instinct for what would hold his attention, piped up the song by which Spanish children keep in memory the name of a true patriot. By the middle of the second line, Rafael's fresh treble was chiming in with hers, though his gaze never wavered from the wonder-working fez.

"As he came from the Senate,
Men whispered to Prim:
'Be wary, be wary,
For life and for limb.'
Then answered the General:
'Come blessing, come bane,
I live or I die
In the service of Spain.'

"In the Street of the Turk,
Where the starlight was dim,
Nine cowardly bullets
Gave greeting to Prim.
The best of the Spaniards
Lay smitten and slain,
And the new King he died for
Came weeping to Spain."

"Now! *now!*" cried Rafael, and whisked the red cap off the stone, which looked – precisely as it had looked before. Not one flake of puffy crust, not one white, tempting crumb betrayed whatever change might have come to pass under that magic covering. The children fell flat on their stomachs on either side of this doubtful substance and first Rafael, then Pilarica, thrust out a red tongue and licked it cautiously. The taste was gritty. Rafael tried to take a bite, but his white young teeth slipped helplessly off the flinty surface. The boy squatted back on his heels, his

small fists clenched, and glared darkly out before him.

"Perhaps one of the others – " faltered Pilarica.

"They are all alike," interrupted Rafael, in a voice harsh with mounting anger. "They are stones, just stones, and they always will be stones. I knew it all the time."

"Our rolls are very, very hard once in a while," ventured the little girl again, but this remark was met with scornful silence.

"Or I might hunt for a toad," she persisted, dismayed by Rafael's sombre stare. "Toads are much softer than stones, and perhaps – "

But the boy had bounded to his feet and was stamping furiously upon the magic cap.

"The gypsy is a humbug, and the cap is a humbug," he exclaimed chokingly, "and I have been cheated out of my watch and chain, – my silver watch and chain that my father gave me. I will not bear it. I am going down the hill to meet Rodrigo, and he will make that lying old thief give them back to me."

And without another glance toward the little sister whom he had so loftily taken under his protection, Rafael, bare-headed, dashed away and disappeared down the steep avenue by which Rodrigo usually came home from the Institute.

The tears trembled for a moment on Pilarica's long eyelashes, as she found herself thus forsaken, but she was a practical little person on occasion, as the sisters of impulsive brothers needs must be, and so she picked up the red fez, brushed away the dust, folded it neatly and hid it in her bodice. Then she scattered the

stones far and wide, so that Rafael might not come upon that unlucky row again and be stung by the reminder of his loss.

And what next? For a moment the child looked longingly down, from her green nook, on the outspread city of Granada, with its clusters of gray towers and spires that seemed to be talking together in the purple air about the times that were. Rafael was allowed to go half-way down the Alhambra hill to meet Rodrigo, and sometimes Rodrigo, on a holiday, would take his little brother into the city with him for a whole afternoon, but Rodrigo, who was a student and knew everything, said it was best for girls to bide at home. Only yesterday Rafael had gone into Granada with Rodrigo, to see a wonder-working troupe of jugglers, and returned rejoicing in the red fez. An Arab peddler, who was, as well, snake-charmer and sword-eater, pleased by the boy's wide-eyed admiration of his exploits, had tossed it to him with the laughing words: "Red is the color of magic." And Tia Marta went down to Granada sometimes with the donkey Shags for the frugal family supplies, but she could not be bothered with Pilarica, while Grandfather, who never found Pilarica a bother, was too feeble now for the confusion of the city streets and for the long climb back up the hill.

So the child lifted her wistful eyes from the proud old city to the far sweep of the plain beyond, a plain rich in gardens and vineyards, orchards and olive-groves, and then she looked out further yet to the ranks of snow-clad mountains that shut in the view. Those glistening summits made her lonely, and when a

scamper of small feet came her way and a cry of eager voices called her name, Pilarica leapt down from her perch on the wall and let herself be swept along with the roguish little rabble of the Alhambra hill.

Tia Marta always scolded when Pilarica was found playing with the Alhambra children, for there were usually a few gypsies, rude and lawless, in the group, and some even of the Spaniards were so ill-bred as to make sport of strangers. But they were children, for all that, with the blithe laughter of children, and all the more determined to play with Pilarica because they knew that Pilarica was forbidden to play with them.

"To the Alhambra!" cried Arnaldo. "There are many people there, ugly people, with blue eyes, and hair the color of lemons, and faces flat like pesetas. There are so many that Don Francisco is as flustered as a fish in hot water and he has forgotten to lock the door after them. He will not notice us at all if we are careful to keep a court or two behind. But you must not run on and beg of the people, Zinga, and you, Leandro, must not be slipping your sly fingers into the ladies' bags, or we shall all be driven out together."

"I will do as I choose," retorted the wild-haired gypsy girl, while the hawk-eyed gypsy lad, barely in his teens but already a skillful pickpocket, gripped the gay-handled knife in his belt and scowled defiance at Arnaldo.

Pilarica, frightened by the fierce looks, fell back with the little ones, Isabelita and Carmencita, chubby Pepito, and the gypsy

two-year-olds, Rosita and Benito, letting the bigger and rougher children lead the way. So in two companies they tagged after the tourists up into the Court of Myrtles, with its great pool enclosed by myrtle hedges, and on to the Hall of the Ambassadors, whose walls are like lace of rare design and whose domed ceiling, all white and gold and blue, studded with starry figures, seems a bit of sky. When they had come to the Court of the Lions, whose multitude of white marble columns look, in their varied grouping, like guests frozen by some playful enchantment just as they were chatting together or musing apart in this exquisite throne-room of the Sultans, the smaller children began to lag. Plump Pepito sat down firmly on the floor. Carmencita, startled by the twelve marble lions that uphold the fountain-basin in the center, puckered up her face for a cry, and Pilarica, to divert her, started one of the circle-games in which Spanish children delight. Hand in hand, the little dancers tripped about like a ring of fairies, until Pilarica's clear voice led them in the song of San Serení, the well-beloved Saint of Gentleness. All but the wee gypsies knew every stanza, singing lustily, and even Benito and Rosita acted out the gymnastic movements with the rest, kneeling, sitting, lying back and jumping up again, as the several verses directed.

"San Serení of the Mountain,
Our Saint of Courtesy,
I, as a good Christian,
Will drop upon my knee.

"San Serení of the Mountain,
Where the strong winds pass,
I, as a good Christian,
Will seat me on the grass.

"San Serení of the Mountain,
Where the white clouds fly,
I, as a good Christian,
Upon the ground will lie.

"San Serení of the Mountain,
Where earth and heaven meet,
I, as a good Christian,
Will spring upon my feet."

Their own games were much more interesting to the children than the glories of the old Moorish palace, and they flocked about Pilarica, each clamoring for a favorite dance.

"Little Bird Pinta," teased Isabelita.

"Little White Pigeons," whined Carmencita, who was always on the verge of tears.

"Little Blind Hen," shouted Pepito.

"Pin – Pige – Hen," echoed the gypsy babies impartially.

"The Charcoal Woman," wept Carmencita.

"Butterfly Tag," coaxed Isabelita.

"Charcoal-Butter," chimed in the obliging gypsy babies.

"Grasshopper! Grasshopper!" roared Pepito and thereupon

began to skip about, his fat hands clasped under his knees, gasping as tunefully as he could:

"Grasshopper sent me an invitation
To come and share his occupation.
Grasshopper dear, how could I say no?
Grasshopper, Grasshopper, here I go!"

"Hush! hush!" urged Pilarica. "We will play *Larán-larito*, and Pepito shall be the cheese."

So Pepito, easily rolling himself up into a round, soft ball, proudly occupied the center of the scene, while the others, suiting their action to the words of the song, danced about him, ever drawing nearer and nearer, ready for the final pounce.

"The shepherdess rose lightly
– *Larán-larán-larito*—
The shepherdess rose lightly
From off her heather seat – O.

"Her goats went leaping homeward
– *Larán-larán-larito*—
Her goats went leaping homeward
On nimble little feet – O.

"With strong young hands she milked them
– *Larán-larán-larito*—
With strong young hands she milked them

And made a cheese for treat – O.

"The kitty watched and wondered
– *Larán-larán-larito*—
The kitty crept and pondered
If it were good to eat – O.

"The kitty sprang upon it
– *Larán-larán-larito*—
The kitty sprang upon it,
As we spring on Pepito."

But just at the thrilling moment when all the five kitties flung themselves upon the plump, indignant cheese, which struck out right and left with pudgy fists and defended itself as never cheese was known to do before, there arose a hubbub in the further halls of the Alhambra and the larger boys and girls came rushing back, pursued by Don Francisco, the guardian of the palace, and a purple-faced foreigner whose voice sounded as if he were using bad language.

Arnaldo seized the hand of Isabelita, Zinga made a snatch at Rosita, and even Leandro, flinging back a silver cigar-case as he ran, paused to catch up the toddling Benito, while Carmencita wailed so piteously and Pepito bawled so lustily that the big children who had no little brothers and sisters to look after hustled these two clamorous waifs along in the flight. But nobody took thought for Pilarica, who, terrified by the hue and cry,

turned and fled down one arched passage after another, across dim chambers and through long galleries, until, at last, she could hear nothing but stillness anywhere about her, and that, queerly enough, frightened her more than all the noise had done.

IV
RAFAEL IN DISGRACE

IF Rafael had waited for his brother at the Gate of the Pomegranates, as usual, things might not have turned out quite so badly. For here the way from Granada up the Alhambra hill opens into three avenues, and the boy, in his impatience, having failed to meet Rodrigo on the shortest and steepest, dashed up again by the second and down by the third, and so managed to miss him altogether. For while Rafael, back once more at the Gate of the Pomegranates, tired out by so much headlong running, was cooling his parched throat at a runlet of sparkling water, Rodrigo was already at home, opening the gate of the old garden.

A tall, dark, graceful lad of eighteen, a scholar's satchel strapped to his shoulders, he swung the gate wide and stepped back with much deference to make way for his companion.

"After you, sir," he said.

But this companion, a man of middle age, sturdy and square-chinned, clad in the uniform of a naval engineer, stood motionless. His face, set in stern lines, was under perfect control, yet, as the son beside him half divined, it was harder for him to enter that fragrant, blossoming enclosure than to face the enemy's cannon. For it was here that, something over three years

ago, he had brought from their simple but pleasant lodgings in Cadiz his tenderly loved wife, hoping that the air of the hilltop might restore her failing strength. Half the savings of a frugal lifetime had been spent to call a great physician from Madrid. He prescribed little medicine, but an abundance of fresh eggs and pure goat's milk and bade them, to the horror of their devoted maid, always known to the children as Tia Marta, set the invalid's bed out in the open. But not the restful cool of the evening air nor the living warmth of the sunshine could avail, and to the man who halted at the gate this beautiful garden was the place of sorrow. Recalled to his ship almost immediately after his wife's death, there had been no time to find a new home for his children. So he had left them in this wild Paradise under charge of his gentle father-in-law and of the faithful, though sharp-tongued, Tia Marta. Since then he had not been able to visit them, for his ship had been sent to the Pacific, and except for brief letters, written to Rodrigo from time to time, and for the small but punctual sums of money forwarded to a Granada bank for the family support, they had heard nothing of him.

Rodrigo, too, left much to be desired as a correspondent, although his handwriting blossomed out in bolder flourishes from year to year. He wrote of his progress in his studies, his prizes in mathematics, his interest in the new English sports, his ambition to enter an engineering school and follow his father's career, and added in a postscript that the rest of the family were well. And all their talk on the homeward climb, after the officer had astonished

and rejoiced his son by calling for him at the Institute, had still been of Rodrigo, his successes, his amusements, his future. It would have amazed that vivacious youth to know that under all the kindly responses, the father's heart was yearning toward the little daughter, longing to find in her face, hardly more than a baby face as he remembered it, some image of her mother's. Of Rafael he scarcely thought at all. He recollected, without interest, that the younger boy was said to take after him, while both Rodrigo and Pilarica were held to resemble their mother, and it was that resemblance which he craved. He himself recognized it in Rodrigo's sunny looks and charming manners, but the lad's frank egotism was all his own.

The lingerer at the gate drew a long breath and entered the garden. In spite of himself, his steps turned toward an open place among the orange trees, the place where his wife's bed had stood, but there was no bed there now, only an old, old man, seated on the ground and idly piling up the fallen fruit into a golden pyramid. As he went on with his building, he was crooning over and over:

> "Many laughing ladies
> In a castle green;
> All are dressed in yellow
> And fit to serve the Queen."

The new-comer, for all his self-control, gave a start of painful surprise.

"Is that your grandfather?" he asked Rodrigo.

"Ay, sir, to be sure it is, and a grandfather as good as bread," answered the lad, with a sensitive flush, while, stooping quickly, he fairly lifted the light, swaying figure to its feet.

"Never mind the oranges now, Grandfather," he said brightly. "See! We have an honored guest."

The old man turned a dazed look upon his son-in-law.

"I am at your feet, sir," he quavered, in the courteous phrase of Andalusia. "The house is yours."

"But surely you know me, – Catalina's husband," pleaded the stranger, opening his arms.

The old man nodded many times, but drew back from the embrace.

"You are the young man from Saragossa who would wed my daughter Catalina," he answered slowly. "She is away just now – I forget where – but when she comes home again, we will talk of these things." Then, moving his fingers as if he were touching the strings of a guitar, he began to sing softly:

> "Going and coming,
> I lost my heart one day.
> Love came to me laughing;
> In tears Love went away."

"How long has he been like this?" asked the officer, turning sharply on Rodrigo. "And why have you told me nothing of it?"

"Your pardon, sir," pleaded the lad, "but what was there to

tell? Grandfather is often confused by evening, when he is tired. He will be quite clear-headed again in the morning. Perhaps he is not so active as he was, but he does a little work about the garden and he will amuse the children hour after hour with his stories and riddles and scraps of song. He loves Pilarica better than his eyelashes."

"Where is Pilarica?" asked the father.

"Where is Pilarica?" echoed the old man, speaking more alertly than before. "I have played the airs that please her best, and there were no dancing feet."

"She may be helping Tia Marta with the supper," suggested Rodrigo, turning toward the house. "And there goes Tia Marta now. Oho! Tia Marta! Tia Marta!"

"Ay, indeed! Tia Marta! Tia Marta!" came a mocking response from where a wiry figure, arrayed in saffron kerchief and purple petticoat, was seen hurrying in another direction through the shrubbery. "Always Tia Marta, from cock-crow to pigeon-roost! Now it's Shags that brays to Tia Marta for his mouthful of chopped straw, and then it's Roxa that mews to Tia Marta for a morsel of dried fish. It's not slave to every Turk I was in the days when they counted me the fairest maid and the finest dancer in Seville. But all make firewood of a fallen tree."

"This is natural, at all events," exclaimed the officer, with the first smile since he had entered the garden. "My good Marta, I kiss your hands."

"Don Carlos!" screamed the old servant, her sharp brown face,

so like a walnut, shining with welcome as she scrambled toward him through bushes that seemed, for very mischief, to catch at her skirts and hold her back. She grasped him by the shoulders and, as he laughingly tried to free himself, pulled down his head and gave him a resounding smack on either cheek. "May all the saints be praised! To see you safe home again is as sweet as God's blessing. But to think – oh, I could beat my bones for very rage! – that the supper to-night is not a supper of festival."

"Never mind that!" protested Don Carlos. "Who but you taught me the saying that no bread is hard to the hungry? Let me see the children. Where is Pilarica?"

"The children! Can I have them forever like puppies under my feet? Pilarica! Do you expect me to keep her shut up in a sugar-bowl for you? She is off with Rafael, who promised to look well after her. Never fear! He has, like every boy, a wolf in his stomach, and supper-time will soon bring them home again."

"Off with Rafael!" repeated Rodrigo, ridding himself of his satchel. "That is why he did not meet me this afternoon at the Gate of the Pomegranates. Ha! I hear him running now, – but he is alone."

All three – for Grandfather had wandered away in search of his guitar – turned to face a bareheaded little lad, drops of sweat standing out upon his forehead and the dark red glowing through the clear brown of his cheeks. Suddenly arrested in his rush, he stood gazing up with wide, happy eyes at the father whom he recognized at once, the father for whom he cherished in secret

a passionate hero-worship.

"Where is Pilarica?" three voices asked in chorus. But Rafael heard only the deep, stern tone of Don Carlos, and it struck him dumb with dismay.

"What have you done with your sister?" demanded that accusing voice again.

"Why – I – I left her – I left her at the foot of the old Watch-Tower," faltered the culprit.

"I wanted – I wanted to meet Rodrigo. And then – and then – I – I forgot Pilarica."

Rafael's voice sank lower and lower under his father's gathering frown. That father, accustomed as a naval officer to enforce strict discipline, spoke again with such cutting rebuke that the child before him shivered from head to foot.

"How long ago was it that you deserted your sister?"

"I – I don't know," murmured Rafael. "An hour. Two hours. I don't know. I – I gave my watch to the Gypsy King."

"The thief that he was to take the poor boy's treasure!" broke in Tia Marta, nervously trying to divert the father's wrath. "Those gypsies would rob the Holy Child of his swaddling-clothes, and St. Joseph of his ass. Ay, they would let the young Madonna walk the desert on foot and wrap the Blessed Babe in – "

"Rodrigo," interrupted Don Carlos, "we go to find Pilarica. And do you, Marta, never again confide my little daughter to the care of a heedless boy who cannot even guard his own pockets."

For a moment Rafael stood as if stunned, his black head

drooping. He had dreamed so often of his father's home-coming, but never, never had he dreamed a scene like this. In the next moment Rodrigo, as he followed his father's impatient strides toward the gate, was passed, at the Sultana Fountain, by a speeding little figure, and Don Carlos felt a pair of small, hot hands fasten on his arm.

"Oh, do me the favor, sir, of letting me go with you. I can show you exactly where I left her. She will not have gone far. She may be there yet. I know that I can find her sooner even than Rodrigo. Father! *Father!*"

But Don Carlos, thoroughly displeased, thrust the clinging hands away.

"We want no help of yours. Stay where you are. That is my command. If you are not old enough to understand what it means to betray a trust, at least it is time you learned obedience."

It was midnight, and their hearts had grown heavy with dread, before they found Pilarica. The first trace they had of her was in the gypsy quarter, where the whole cave population came swarming out upon them, aroused by Xarifa's shrill defence of the Gypsy King. He knew nothing whatever of their trumpery trash, she unblushingly declared with the little watch and chain deep in her pocket, nor did he know even by sight their nuisances of children, and he was, moreover, so sick with the misery in his bones that he had not been off his bed for seven days and nights. Rodrigo had enough to do to get his father, whose peremptory bearing only made matters worse, out of the jostling, threatening

crowd before they were actually mobbed, yet he found a chance to throw a smile at a young gypsy girl whose dancing he had often admired.

"A clue, Wildrose of the Hillside! One little clue, Feet of Zephyr!" he coaxed, and Zinga, flashing him a friendly glance, pushed against him in the throng and muttered:

"There are more pearls in the Alhambra than ever the Moors dropped there."

Acting on this doubtful hint, they had roused the indignant Don Francisco from his slumbers, and when that drowsy guardian of the old palace told them of the invasion of children that afternoon, had induced him to conduct a search for Pilarica. By the help of lanterns, for a chill rain had blown over from the Sierra Nevada, quenching the moonlight, they made their way through corridor after corridor and chamber after chamber and court after court. Don Francisco wished to shout the child's name, but her father feared the sound might startle her out of sleep into sudden alarm, and so they pursued their anxious quest as noiselessly as might be.

"Hush!" breathed Rodrigo. He had heard, and not far off, the voice of his little sister, piping faintly:

> "Oh, I have a dolly, and she is dressed in blue,
> With a fluff of satin on her white silk shoe,
> And a lace mantilla to make my dolly gay,
> When I take her dancing this way, this way, this way.

"When she goes out walking in her Manila shawl,
My Andalusian dolly is quite the queen of all.
Gypsies, dukes and candy-men bow down in a row,
When my dolly fans herself, so and so and so."

"It's only Big Brother," spoke Rodrigo quietly and, stepping forward with his lantern, he turned its light on a brave little lassie cuddled in the window-recess of what had been the boudoir of a queen. She was hugging to her heart a most comforting, companionable doll, made out of a bundle of newspapers that one of the tourists had let fall. Pilarica's wisp of a hair-ribbon was serving as a belt and the costume was completed by Rafael's red fez. Although the child had not slept through all the long, dark hours, the shapeless doll had borne her such good company, rustling affably whenever conversation was in order, that she had forgotten to be afraid.

V
A BEAUTIFUL FEVER

PILARICA did not remember her father, and it was not without some persuasion that she consented to let the stranger carry her, while to Rodrigo was entrusted the newspaper doll, whose demeanor he pronounced quite stiff, although her intelligence was beyond dispute.

"Don't lose the magic cap, pl – " murmured Pilarica, but for once her politeness remained incomplete, for no sooner was the silky head at rest on the broad shoulder than the exhausted child fell fast asleep. Curiously enough, the warm pressure of that nestling little body turned the thoughts of Don Carlos, for the first time since he had left the garden, to Rafael. Had he, perhaps, been too harsh with the youngster? How suddenly that first, happy look in the great eyes had been clouded with distress and shame! The boys' mother had always been tender with them, even in their wrongdoing. And he, accustomed as he was to deal with bolts and wheels, must learn not to handle the hearts of children as if they, too, were made of iron. The father's mood was already self-reproachful as they entered the stone kitchen, which a ruddy *brasero*, the Spanish fire-pan where charcoal is burned, and a savory odor of stew made cozy and homelike.

"Now praised be the Virgin of the Pillar!" cried Tia

Marta, unceremoniously snatching Pilarica from Don Carlos and carrying her to the warmth of the *brasero*. And while Rodrigo, his vivacity unchecked by hunger and fatigue, poured forth the story of the rescue, which lost nothing in his telling, Tia Marta woke the little sleeper enough to make her swallow a cup of hot soup, undressed her, rubbed the slender body into a rosy glow and tucked her snugly away in bed. Grandfather stirred in his cot as the child was brought into the inner room and hummed a snatch of lullaby, but Rafael's cot was empty.

Tia Marta's squinting eyes, as she returned to the kitchen, peered into the shadows that lay beyond the flickering circle of light cast by the *brasero*.

"Rafael, come and get your soup and then to bed," she called. "You must be as sleepy as the shepherds of Bethlehem."

But no Rafael replied. Rodrigo and his father exchanged startled glances.

"Didn't the boy come back to the house?" asked Don Carlos.

"Do you mean to say you didn't take him with you?" demanded Tia Marta.

"Father commanded him to stop where he was," said Rodrigo, aghast, and rushed out again into the rain, Don Carlos and Tia Marta at his heels.

They found Rafael, drenched to the skin, standing erect with folded arms beside the Sultana Fountain, a stubborn little image of obedience; but when his brother's hand fell on his shoulder, the child reeled and fainted away. Rodrigo caught the boy just in time

to save the dark head from crashing against the marble curb of the basin and, with Tia Marta's help, carried him to the kitchen. Here they both worked over the passive form with rubbing, hot flannels and every remedy they knew, while Don Carlos, sick at heart, looked on, not venturing to touch his little son.

Rafael revived at last, but only to pass into fit after fit of convulsive crying. He lay in his brother's arms, refusing to taste the hot soup, goat's milk, herb tea, that, one after another, Tia Marta pressed upon him.

"But it's peppermint tea, my angel," she wheedled, "and peppermint is the good herb that St. Anne blessed."

"It's bed-time, Rafael," pleaded Rodrigo. "Isn't it, father? And no boy ever goes to bed without his supper."

"Bed-time? I should think so indeed," replied Don Carlos. "It's quarter of two by my watch."

At the word *watch* Rafael's wild crying broke out anew.

"Do you see those tears, Don Carlos?" scolded Tia Marta, whose anxiety had to vent itself in abuse of somebody. "Tears as big as chickpeas! A house in which a child weeps such tears as those is not in the grace of God. And why, in the name of all the demons, must you be talking of watches? Such is the tact of Aragon, not of Andalusia. Oh, you Aragonese! You would speak of a rope in the house of a man that had been hanged."

Rafael's crying suddenly ceased. The loyal little lad sat upright on Rodrigo's knee and turned his stained and swollen face with a certain dignity upon the old servant.

"You are not to speak to my father like that, Tia Marta," he said. "What my father does is right."

"Oh, the impudent little cherub!" cried Tia Marta, hugely delighted, while Don Carlos had to turn away to hide the quiver that surprised his lip.

The next day Pilarica, though she slept till noon, was as well as ever, but Rafael lay, now shaking with chills, now burning with fever, yet always wearing the rumpled red fez, which his light-headed fancies seemed to connect with the look of comprehending love in his father's eyes.

Those first few days left little memory of their stupors and their nauseas and their pains, but when Rafael began to pay heed to life once more, he found himself thin and languid, to be sure, but the object of most gratifying attentions from the entire household. His cot had been placed – not without a pitched battle between Don Carlos and Tia Marta – under the old olive tree just before the door, and Grandfather, in his accustomed seat on the mosaic bench, had brightened up again into the best of entertainers. All this stir and excitement in the household seemed to have scattered the mists that had been creeping slowly over his brain. He was more alert than for many months and no longer played with oranges and snails. He knew his son-in-law now and while he had as many riddles in his white head as ever, he gave them out only as the children called for them. When Rafael saw that they amused his father, the boy began to hold them in higher esteem.

"They do well for girls at any time," he confided to Rodrigo, "and for men when we are ill." But he insisted that the answers should be guessed.

"Ask us each a riddle in turn, please, Grandfather," he requested one marvelous Andalusian evening, when the earliest stars were pricking with gold the rich purple of the sky, "and I will pronounce the forfeits for those who fail."

"With whom do I begin?" asked Grandfather.

"With my father, of course," responded Rafael.

"No, no, my son. Always the ladies first," corrected Don Carlos, drawing Pilarica to his side.

"Then it is Tia Marta who begins, for she is bigger than I am, and so she must be more of a lady," observed Pilarica wisely.

Just then the five-minute evening peal from the old Watch-Tower rang out, and Grandfather, turning to Tia Marta, recited:

> "Shut in a tower, I tell you truth,
> Is a saintly woman with only one tooth;
> But whenever she calls, this good old soul,
> Sandals patter and carriages roll."

"Bah!" ejaculated Tia Marta. "As if I had not known that ever since I could suck sugarcane! To ask a church-bell riddle of one who was born on the top of the Giralda!"

> "I was born in a bell-tower;
> So my mother tells;

When the sponsors came to my christening,
I was ringing the bells,"

sang Grandfather roguishly, strumming on his guitar.

"But this fiddling old grasshopper is enough to set the blood of St. Patience on fire," snapped Tia Marta, who had been standing in the doorway and now indignantly popped back into her kitchen.

"*Did* Tia Marta ring the bells when she was a teenty tinty baby?" asked Pilarica.

"Not just that," replied Don Carlos, who was seated in the hammock that he had swung beside Rafael's cot in order to care for the sick boy at night, "but it is true that she was born high up in the Giralda, which, as she may have told you, is the beautiful old Moorish minaret, that looks as if it were wrought of rose-colored lace, close by the glorious cathedral of Seville. There are thirty bells in this tower and they all have names. One is Saint Mary, I remember, and one Saint Peter, and one The Fat Lady, and one The Sweet Singer. Tia Marta can tell you all the rest, for she spent the first seventeen years of her life among them, way up above the roofs of the city. The hawks that build their nests even higher, under the gilded wings of the crowning statue of Faith, used to drop their black feathers at her feet and she would wear them in her hair when she came down to the festivals of Seville. She was a wonderful dancer in those days, I have heard your grandfather say."

"Ay, that she was," chimed in the old man, speaking with unwonted animation. "I can see her now in her yellow skirt spangled all over with furbelows, wearing her wreath of red poppies with the best, while her little feet would twinkle to the clicking of the castanets."

"But how did she happen to grow so old and ugly?" asked Rafael.

"Oh, Rafael!" exclaimed Pilarica, shocked by such unmannerly frankness.

"Very nobly," answered Don Carlos, stroking his little daughter's hair. "By love and by service. When her father, the bell-ringer, died, and a stranger took his rooms in the Giralda, Marta came down into the city and entered the home of your grandfather and sainted grandmother – "

"May God rejoice her soul with the light of Paradise!" murmured Grandfather devoutly.

"There Marta was nurse-maid for your mother, then a little witch two or three years old," continued Don Carlos. "And she grew so fond of her charge that she never left her, not even when your mother had the infinite goodness to marry me, and we moved to Cadiz, my naval station then. And now Tia Marta, for your mother's blessed sake, spends all her strength and devotion upon you. We must never forget what we owe her, and we must always treat her with respect and affection."

Rodrigo, who was pacing the tiled walks near by, trying to puzzle out a mathematical problem, turned to say:

"I'll bring her a cherry ribbon from Granada to-morrow."

"And she may wash my ears as hard as she likes," magnanimously declared Rafael.

But Pilarica slipped from within the circle of her father's arm and ran into the house to surprise Tia Marta with a sudden squeeze and shower of kisses.

By the time the little girl came out again, Grandfather had a riddle for her:

> "When she wears her silvery bonnet,
> My lady is passing fair;
> But she's always turning her head about,
> Gazing here and there."

As the child hesitated, Rodrigo pointed to the luminous horizon, and she promptly said: "The Moon."

"But that's not playing fair," protested Rafael.

"Oh, we don't expect girls to play fair," laughed his brother.

"But I *want* to play fair," urged Pilarica. "And I want to be punished, like Rafael, when I do wrong. Why wasn't it just as bad in me to disobey Tia Marta and run off with the Alhambra children as it was in Rafael to leave me alone?"

"It's hard to explain, Sugarplum," said her father, "but the world expects certain things of a man, courage and faithfulness and honor, and a boy is in training for manhood."

"And what is a girl in training for?" asked Pilarica.

"To be amiable and charming," answered Rodrigo promptly.

"But I want to be faithful and hon'able, too," persisted Pilarica.

"A man must do his duty," declared Don Carlos, slowly and earnestly. "That is what manliness means. He must satisfy his conscience. But it is enough for a little girl if she content her father's heart, as my darling contents mine. And when the years shall bring you a husband, then he will be your conscience."

"But I want a conscience of my own," pouted Pilarica. "And I do not want a husband at all. If I must grow up, I will be a nun and make sweetmeats."

"Time enough to change your mind," scoffed Rodrigo. "What is my riddle, Grandfather?"

"Wait till my father has had his turn," jealously interposed Rafael.

Grandfather was all ready:

> "Here comes a lady driving into town;
> Softly the horses go;
> Her mantle's purple, and black her gown;
> Gems on her forehead glow."

"But this is difficult," groaned Don Carlos, thinking so hard that the hammock creaked.

"I know," cooed Pilarica. "Grandfather told it to me once before."

"Don't give my father a hint," warned Rafael.

"But Rodrigo gave me a hint," returned Pilarica.

"Oh, that's different," declared Rodrigo, almost impatiently.

"*Men* must play fair."

But it was some time before Don Carlos found the right answer, "Night"; and Rodrigo had almost as much trouble in guessing his.

> "I'm a very tiny gentleman,
> But I am seen from far.
> Out walking in the evening
> And lighting my cigar."

He called out "Firefly" only just in time to escape a forfeit, but Rafael, to whom fell the puzzle:

> "A plate of nuts upset at night,
> But all picked up by morning light,"

quickly guessed "Stars."

He could hardly help it, with such a shining company of them shedding their gracious looks down upon the garden.

"How many stars are there, Grandfather?" he asked.

"One thousand and seven," replied Grandfather, "except on Holy Night, the blessed Christmas Eve, when there flashes out one more, brightest of all, the Star of Bethlehem."

"That is your Andalusian arithmetic," laughed Don Carlos, shaking his head. "They say in Galicia that a man should not try to count the stars, lest he come to have as many wrinkles as the number of stars he has counted."

"Where's Galicia?" asked Pilarica.

"Far from here, in the northwest corner of Spain," answered Don Carlos, more gravely than seemed necessary. "My sister – your Aunt Barbara – lives there, and one of these days I am going to tell you more of her, and of her husband, your Uncle Manuel, and of your Cousin Dolores, who is a year or two younger than Rodrigo. They are the only kindred we have in the world."

Even Rodrigo wondered at the sudden seriousness in Don Carlos' tone, but Grandfather, at that moment, chanted another riddle, which, as it turned out, nobody could guess, not even Tia Marta, who had come to the doorway again.

> "Tell me, what is the thing I mean,
> That the greater it grows the less is seen."

Grandfather finally had to tell them the answer, "Darkness," and then Rafael assigned to everybody a forfeit. Tia Marta was sent into the house after a treat, which, for Rafael's own forfeit, he was not to taste; Pilarica danced, Rodrigo vaulted over the cot, and Don Carlos was begged to "tell about the heroes of Spain."

"To-morrow," said the father, taking Rafael's wrist in his cool fingers and counting the pulse. "You have had quite enough talking for to-night, my son."

And then the English consul, whose home was on the Alhambra hill, dropped in, just as Tia Marta was passing around – but not to Rafael – the most delicious cinnamon paste whose

secret she had learned from the nuns in Seville. The consul shook hands with Don Carlos and Rodrigo, patted Pilarica's head, complimented Tia Marta on the paste, and then bent over Rafael's cot.

"So you have been having a fever, my little man?" he said.

"Oh, such a beautiful fever!" sighed Rafael blissfully, snuggling his face against his father's coat sleeve.

"But how is that?" queried the consul in surprise.

"It's the red cap," volunteered Pilarica. "It doesn't exactly turn real stones into real bread, but it makes trouble pleasant, and that's the same thing, only better."

The Englishman did not look much enlightened.

VI
HEROES AND DONKEYS

ON the morrow Don Carlos was promptly called upon to redeem his forfeit. Rafael was so much better that he had been lifted over to his father's hammock, where, propped against pillows, he sat almost upright, taking, for the first time since his illness began, his usual breakfast of chocolate and bread. Pilarica, in celebration of this happy event, had waited to breakfast with him, and the two children were having great fun, throwing back their heads in unison as they dipped the long strips of bread into their bowls of cinnamon-flavored chocolate, so thick that it clung to the bread in a sticky lump. They were very dexterous in whirling up the bread-sticks and directing the sluggish brown trickle into their mouths without spilling a drop, afterwards biting off the chocolate-laden end of the bread and hungrily dipping again.

"And now for the heroes!" called Rafael.

"You didn't say please," rebuked Pilarica.

"Heroes, please," amended the boy, "but girls ought not to correct their brothers."

"Do me the favor to excuse me," apologized Pilarica.

"There is no occasion for it," returned Rafael with his best Andalusian manner.

"A thousand thanks," responded Pilarica. And now that this series of polite phrases, taught in every Spanish nursery, was duly accomplished, Rafael called again for the heroes.

"One at a time," responded the father, throwing out his hands with a gesture of playful remonstrance. He had just come back from his morning walk with Rodrigo, whom he liked to accompany for at least a part of the way to the Institute, and was warm from the return climb. "One hero a day, like one breakfast a day, is quite enough for Don Anybody."

Then he told them stories of a champion who was mighty in Spain eight hundred years ago.

"If I were one hundred times as old as I am," cried Rafael with sparkling eyes, "perhaps I would have seen him."

"Perhaps," smiled Don Carlos, and went on to tell the children that this warrior's name was the name of their own brother, Rodrigo, though he had other names, too, as Ruy Diaz de Bivar, and was most often called the Cid, or Lord, a title given him by the five Moorish kings whom he conquered all at once.

"*Five – Moorish – kings!*" exclaimed Rafael in rapture, while Pilarica, to help her imagination, propped up five tawny breadsticks in a row.

So their father told them how the Cid, when a stripling not twenty summers old, had ridden forth on his fiery horse, Bavieca, followed by a troop of youthful friends, against those five royal Moors who, with a great army, were plundering Castile, and how he overthrew them and set their host of Christian captives free.

"Our Rodrigo would have done that, too," declared Rafael proudly, while Pilarica, with one valiant dab of her forefinger, tumbled the five bread-sticks into the dust. Later, remembering Tia Marta, she picked them up and polished them off with a handful of rose-petals before restoring them to the plate.

Finding his hero so popular, Don Carlos recited what he could remember of an old Spanish ballad that tells of the Cid's offer to give Bavieca to the King of Castile.

> "The King looked on him kindly, as on a vassal true;
> Then to the King Ruy Diaz spake after reverence due:
> 'O King, the thing is shameful, that any man beside
> The liege lord of Castile himself should Bavieca ride:
>
> " 'For neither Spain nor Araby could another charger bring
> So good as he, and certes, the best befits my king.
> But that you may behold him, and know him to the core,
> I'll make him go as he was wont when his nostrils smelt the Moor.'
>
> "With that, the Cid, clad as he was in mantle furred and wide,
> On Bavieca vaulting, put the rowel in his side;
> And wildly, madly sped the steed, while the mantle streamed behind
> As when the banner of Castile beats in a stormy wind.
>
> "And all that saw them praised them; they lauded man and horse

As mated well and rivalless for gallantry and force;
Ne'er had they looked on horseman might to this knight come near,
Nor on other charger worthy of such a cavalier.

"Thus, to and fro a-rushing, the fierce and furious steed,
He snapped in twain his hither rein. 'God pity now the Cid!'
'God pity Diaz!' cried the lords, but when they looked again,
They saw Ruy Diaz ruling him with the fragment of his rein;
They saw him proudly ruling with gesture firm and calm,
Like a true lord commanding, and obeyed as by a lamb.

"And so he led him foaming and panting to the King;
But 'No!' said Don Alfonso, 'it were a shameful thing
That peerless Bavieca should ever be bestrid
By any mortal but Bivar. Mount, mount again, my Cid!' "

Rafael's mind was still full of the Cid when, two or three days later, he was well enough to take a short ride on Shags outside the garden. The rough-coated, mouse-colored donkey carried his young master jauntily, being apparently well pleased to see him out again. Don Carlos, racking his memory for more ballads of the Cid, was walking beside Shags, when Pilarica, who had tripped on ahead and turned a corner, uttered a cry of distress. The father sprang forward and found the child on her knees in the dust of the highway, her face streaming with tears, while she held up her clasped hands in entreaty to a sullen-faced fellow who was brutally beating his ass. The poor creature, hardly more than

skin and bones, was so cruelly overladen with sacks of charcoal that he had stumbled on a steep and stony bit of the road and broken the fastenings of one of the sacks, whose contents were merrily making off downhill like little black imps on a holiday. The peasant, in a fury, was dealing the ass great fisticuffs on the tender nose, and between the eyes, shut in patient endurance of the blows.

Don Carlos had often seen animals beaten and had usually passed by with a shrug of annoyance, but the anguish of pity in his little daughter's face and attitude suddenly smote him with an intolerable feeling, as if that horny fist were pounding his own heart.

"Hold, there, my friend!" he protested. "Enough is as good as a feast. If you kill your donkey, who will carry the load?"

The charcoal seller, his arm raised for another blow, stared in astonishment at the speaker.

"You would do well to put your tongue in your pocket," he growled. "This ass is mine, to beat if I choose and to kill if I choose. I am thinking that is what I will do, for his skin is the best of him now."

Pilarica rose and rushed to her father, her eyes their deepest pansy purple with beseeching.

"Oh, dearest father, if you please! If you would kindly do me the favor! Instead of the doll with golden hair, if only you would give me this sweet, beautiful donkey!"

Her father lifted her in his arms, so that the flushed, wet face

was pressed against his own.

"Do you mean it, Honeydrop? Think again. Do you really wish me to buy you this wretched ass in place of the wonderful dolly with Paris clothes, in the Granada shop? I am afraid there is not money enough for both."

"Oh, yes, yes!" entreated Pilarica. "The doll is happy in the shop-window, where she can see the children smile at her as they go by, but the donkey – oh, father, *the donkey!*"

The peasant, whose arm had fallen to his side and who had been listening shrewdly, now stepped forward, touching his hat with a surly civility.

"It's not for the price of a basket of cabbages I would be selling my fine donkey. I'm a poor man, your Worship. All that God has given me for my portion in the world is morning and evening, three pennyworths of poverty, and a bushel of children with the gullets of sharks. What would become of us all without my strong, good ass?"

"I'll give you two dollars for your dingy old rattlebones, my man, and that is twice what anybody else would be fool enough to give you," said Don Carlos, holding out the coins.

The charcoal-seller looked at them greedily, but still hung back.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.