

the jury room, through the closed doors of which can be heard loud and often heated and profane wranglings,—which will suddenly cease, and the jury will come filing back, with a self-satisfied air, and deliver a verdict which, in ninety-five per cent of the cases, is just about right, when looked at from the broad point of view of doing substantial justice. Bearing in mind that the defendant's guilt must be proved beyond a reasonable doubt, it is but seldom that a fair-minded prosecuting officer can quarrel with the verdicts of acquittal rendered in the county of New York. Frequently, juries will disagree in the most exasperating manner, owing to the presence of "the eleven obstinate men;" but when a ver-

dict is rendered, it is safe to say that it is a vindication of the wisdom of the fathers in leaving the question of the guilt or innocence of a citizen to the judgment of twelve of his fellow citizens. Before that body the innocent man may gladly come, assured that his fellow citizens composing it desire to acquit rather than convict, and that their combined intelligence and knowledge of men will appreciate and sympathize with his embarrassment or slowness of wit; while the guilty man dreads the scrutiny of those twelve stolid common-sense faces, for whose composite he knows he is no match, and with reluctance does he break the silence which was formerly imposed upon him by the law.

THE WHITE LLAMA

BY CHARLES F. LUMMIS

WHERE that dusty snake, the old King's Highway to La Paz, wriggles across the brown Puna from the northwest; where dwarfish Indians harrow their fields by breaking a clod at a time, with the same prehistoric stone mace that served their ancestors for a war-club,—men and women side by side belaboring the lumpy chacras whereunto they shall plant the bitter little potatoes which *will* ripen (and will taste green when ripe), or the barley which *may* ripen one year out of three,—that is where it all happened. Indeed, it *had* to happen there; as you know, if you know Bolivia. Nowhere else in the world could all the things have befallen together which elected a woolly fourfooted beast temporary Judge of Collo-Collo,—and, in purity of truth, one of the best judges ever. A just judge, clearly,—and not like the historic one who ruled that every Indian in his *departamento* should wear "front-eyes" simply because he had received from the Mother Country a cargo

of spectacles on consignment. And a wise judge, beyond peradventure; since between winks he definitely settled questions competent to have floored a Philadelphia lawyer,—if we can imagine that proverb of legal wisdom surviving at all at an altitude where the least thing that happens to a stranger is instant loss of the very fundament of a lawyer, sound wind.

In the first place came Trinidad, herding before him three burros, empty; and strumming the charongo — that Yankeeest device primitive man ever fell upon who had to have a mandolin where there was nothing to make one withal. Within three hundred miles of him there was not a growing stick so thick as a lady's little toe; and the woods of the hugest forest in the world, over behind yonder twenty-thousand foot range — well, by the time a pole the bigness of a walking-stick had come afoot from the Amazonas to the Puna, its market value was just

about what a man could earn by the sweat of his face for a week. Now, the orthodox mandolin finds itself made of wood; and most of us, who know only what we remember, would go without mandolins for a long time, on that bald brow of Bolivia, where there is not a bush in an area the size of New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania put together, and where houses are of porphyry because boards are too costly. But not so the squat Serranos of the Puna, — certainly not, so long as the good Lord furnishes animals that are quite as good lumber as comes from trees, and considerably less work in the sawmill. So Trinidad himself had captured the first predestined armadillo that scuttled across his path; had picked its flesh piecemeal and patiently from out its carapace, and, after drying it, had nailed this symmetrical, horny, hairy bowl to a belly and neck whittled with his own sheath-knife from a bit of pine box-cover, — a stingy slat all the way from The World, for which he had paid a round dollar in La Paz. The strings were sheep-gut, of his own twisting, and the neck was stained red, yellow, and green with herbs he himself had gathered. Altogether, it was Trinidad's own charongo; after a fullness hard to be guessed by us poor folk who can do no better than buy what the brains and hands of other men have done for us.

La Paz was already ten leagues behind him; but he had no thought to ease the road by throwing a leg over one of the vacant pack-saddles. If burros can walk, why not a man? So he trudged calmly at their heels, laying an itérant thumb to the thin-voiced strings, and singing an Aymará love-song. The Caucasian can as little sing as love, at fourteen thousand feet in Bolivia, and has of his feet no joy whatsoever; but this brown troubadour found no difficulty in prosecuting the three industries at one breath. Having sold five vicuña pelts, ten pounds of wool, and two quintals of dried potatoes in the capital, and being now nearly at the end of his seventy-mile round-

trip afoot, it was only natural that he should be in tune. Besides, Chona had smiled! A *real* smile, of white teeth and personal eyes, and not the mere facial efflorescence with which one may favor the purchaser of one's wares. And there's such a difference! One often jumps at the rasp of a horn locust, or the scurry of a lizard among dry leaves, and wonders if — if it was —? But when Old-Man-with-a-Rattle moveth aright that bony miracle of his tail, and the dry skirr goes forth that is as magical in its effect on every living creature as in the mechanics of its utterance, — why, then no one ever wonders. You *know* it Means You! And if the more dangerous serpent that doth bite us all has as many false alarms, he is as unmistakable when we come full upon him.

Next in the procession of Destiny came José Maria, trudging from the other way; single in sex, despite his dual name, and tootling a Pan's pipe to an air assuredly unfamiliar to the Blessed Spouses of Belen. He also had breath to spare, this prehensile-lipped Joseph Mary; and though the nature of his instrument precluded his accompanying it with song, he assailed the double octave of wild reeds with a vigor that made song quite needless. He was on his way from the Desaguadero to La Paz; and having walked but thirty miles since morning, was of course still fresh for music. Nor did the thought of a certain corner in the Plaza de San Francisco tend to lessen the shrilling of his pipes or the length of his stride. This new ditty, of his proper composition, should be played to-morrow on these same cañutes, "with this my mouth," where it could not help but be heard by a nut-brown damsel who would be sitting tailor-wise on the stone flags, knitting skull-caps behind a lot of orderly little heaps (each five cents' worth) of chuño, dried bogas, bird-skins, and other commodities of the Bolivian market-place. *That* would fetch her, — this unresponsive Juno, a full head taller than any Span-

ish soldier in La Paz, and so "built" as are the best cholos in perhaps the only country where the half-breeds outclass in stature, face, and wit the paternal and the maternal races. And pride? Why, she had not even looked at Joseph Mary, above his knees, when he spent every centavo of his monthly trip, and left a yard of sidewalk bare in front of her, and went absolutely without chicha (except an unpaid cup, to which a humane beggar at the corner had invited him). Nor even when he had beset the Pan's pipes for her, only so far away from her station as to the beggar's, — which might have been thirty feet.

But, then, that was only a yaraví that she had heard before, — in fact, every one in Bolivia had known it for a thousand years. While this — this was For Her. Anybody would know that, who should hear. Who else, even in the metropolis of the Choqueyápu, was worth such ululations in the upper octave, except this unsmiling goddess who sat and sold and made no sign, — no, not when the Chief of Police bought out her stock, and spoke to her as only chiefs of police have the face to speak? There were even some who said that the President himself had paid money in hand for enough of dried potatoes from her within a year to have floated the cathedral across Lake Titicaca, and had not yet learned the color of her eyes. But these were mere *oficiales*. Wait till a Master Musician had a fair chance! *She* would know! It would not need the Public Scrivener, who writes even one's love-letters down at the corner, to tell her that no other woman in all Bolivia could possibly have inspired such an agony of adoring minors. And blowing harder than ever in the topmost pipes, José Maria turned the corner and came up with the desolate tambo.

His four llamas marched solemnly into the stone corral, all by themselves. If José Maria had been absent in Halifax, it would have been all the same, — for the native camel of South America has learned his lesson. Even a Boston pundit is less

elastic as to what is Expected of Him. And the old white llama, made pack-wise by José Maria's grandfather, scrupulously and unreservedly bit the youngest of the train, — a raw thing which thought to lie down before its pack was removed. There are only two Christian times for a camel of the Andes to recline by day, — when he is relieved of a proper burden (which is one hundred pounds); and when an improper burden is first laid upon him (which is one hundred and one pounds or upward).

Joseph Mary restored the Pan's pipes reluctantly to his left-hand pouch, and disembarrassed the llamas of their loads. That was all. There was no feeding and no watering to be done, for the best of all reasons, namely, that water and fodder were alike lacking. The llamas could graze again to-morrow by the unharried wayside, while the pipes dreamed out new pilliwinks to the new Composition. José Maria merely set his packs and saddles astride the high corral wall, out of reach of three doleful burros which were nosing wistfully among their own bare *aparejos*. And then he went around to the door of the tambo.

In this cheerless stone box of a room, a presumptive "fire" of taqui was smouldering on the dirt floor. These llama "chips" — the only fuel of the great plateau — do not blaze. By enough asperity of the strongest lungs, they can be induced to a pallid combustion somewhat like that of musty punk. Even now, the owner of the burros was on hands and knees, puffing mightily to persuade so much glow as might warm the morsel of leathery charqui laid upon what courtesy could have called the "coals." The acrid smoke bent everywhither except toward the door, its only exit.

Trinidad looked up long enough to answer in kind to José Maria's *Camísasquetása*, and resumed his task as bel-lows. People who have better things to do are not talkative. At times, when I remember jerked llama-meat, I waver. Perhaps even speech may be as good in

the mouth. But this thought never occurred to me in a tambo. No man, probably, ever came to a tambo but he was tired, hungry, and reticent; it is only in looser hours that he compares charqui and warmed-over boots, — to the distinct disadvantage of charqui, — and that he talks.

Leave is taken for granted, in whatsoever wilderness; and José Maria fished a piece of charqui from his chuspa and began to huff and puff at the opposite side of the sullen embers. Charqui *can* be cooked, if pulverized and fried; but at a fire of taqui in a tambo it is merely warmed enough to start the grease, and then is gnawed lukewarm and laboriously. The two men set strong white teeth edgewise, each to his reluctant morsel. I know of no competent simile for dried llama meat, — and I have gone hungry on many frontiers, too. Horsemeat, mulemeat, iguana, dog, prairie-dog, grasshopper bread, rattlesnake, these are — not only nutritious, they are cordial. But charqui of llama — well, if the First Pharaoh's chef had been bowstrung for frying a rump steak over a slow fire out of all semblance of humanity; and if our Egyptologists had just exhumed the mummy of the culprit, his leathern hand still clasping the imperishable reminder of his guilt; and if we warmed it over by lighting three consecutive matches somewhere under it — why, then I should studiously turn the llama side of the plate to you as I passed it. Me, I prefer mummy.

For an hour, Trinidad and José Maria worried silently at their "meal." It was less because they were satisfied, that each tucked back in his chuspa a saving remnant, than because even Serrano jaws could no more.

Only after each had lighted his cigarillo (by blowing sturdily at the taqui till its coals were worth even that much) did the silence break. Nine tenths of the talking in this world is done because people are afraid one of the other. People who are afraid of nothing except the

only fearsome thing on earth — these talk when they really wish to say something.

The last arriving curlicues of the Pan's pipes had not been lost on Trinidad, even though he was on his knees and blowing taqui. All humans know music. This is so true that even to this day we hire people to translate for us what every man used to talk personally. Nay, we pay, for the privilege of playing a piano with a grindstone, so much money as our great-grandfathers expended to maintain a goodly family for a year.

Trinidad knew none of the patter of those who make vocabularies for vicarious song. He had never so much as heard of "timbre" or of "tonality." But he knew his ears. Clearly, the person felt warm inside. Love or chicha? The mute meal had been time enough to see that the younger man was not drunk. Therefore only affection could ail him, — and with that uncanny instinct which we call *feminine intuition* (because women are about the only civilized persons who have not lost nearly all the natural senses) Trinidad began soberly: —

"Mppss! Thou playest good, and gladly. Is there some one in the city?"

"One," said José Maria, with visible dignity; "and I made that yaraví for her. To-morrow I shall play it to her in the Plaza de San Francisco. She cannot resist That."

"In the Plaza de San Francisco, mppss?" Trinidad spoke rather more curtly. "There are many there."

"But of the many there is only one!" José Maria's voice rose a little. He was younger than Trinidad, by five years, — ten per cent of a long Serrano life. "Why, she is tall as — as — tall as the greater chuncho at Tiahuanacu." With each period, José Maria's voice was pitched a half-tone higher. He was himself five feet and two inches in stature. Among people who live over two miles and a half above sea-level, that is tall enough to feel tall; but still to be liable to conviction of this grenadier of a goddess. "When she hears That, she will give me a smile, —

and they say she has never smiled on man."

Trinidad's voice, on the contrary, had fallen at least a half-tone as he answered calmly:—

"What woman taller than the *Chuncho Mayor* is to smile for thee? Nor what mice! Thou art a boy. Look you! When women smile *So*, it is not for an idle song, but for the breath that goeth forth from all about a Man. I have seen this tall one, and it is certain that no man has ever known her smile. Now, then, for thee?" And Trinidad's voice dropped lower yet, remembering the white teeth of her shining out for him.

Respect to age is the very corner-stone of man's cohesion. No sound social fabric ever stood long without it; and if the paper-doll house of civilization seems to deny the law, and to need no foundation,—neither has it yet withstood the weather of Time. And "Age" among simple peoples,—to a man of twenty-five, thirty is "Age." So José Maria did not "get smart" as a college graduate would have done. He was, indeed, a little shaken. Maybe she *would n't* smile. Who knows? This elder man says not. And so José Maria answered respectfully: "You are older. Me, I don't know about women, except that they are Unlike. And she is even unlike other women. But the rest like music,—music that is for them. And this is very good." He was not boastful, now, but merely professional. He wriggled the Pan's pipes from his pouch, and began to play, very gently. But as the music came to ride new eddies of the smouldering smoke of taqui, he took heart. In an unconscious crescendo, the tooralioos of the reeds swelled and grew upon the dark, close room. No doubt about it—Joseph Mary was a composer. Now that sudden apprehension had overtaken him, his yaraví was clearly finer, sweeter, more searching than when he came up with the tambo with nothing to think of but himself—the Lady, of course, extra.

Trinidad was first to know it. Also, he

was older. "It is very good," he said gravely. "If I were a woman, I would like much a song,—and to have it made for me. But nobody is a woman except women. My Father God, He knows what they will do; but perhaps even He knoweth not what they *may* do. Me, I have seen some, but I do not know them. When it is to deal with them, I think with care what they will like, and listen to what they say—then I do the opposite. And that proves to be what they wished."

"But this *hembra* is different," said José Maria, bridling a little even in the face of seniority.

"She is taller," answered Trinidad imperturbably. "But she is from the same rib."

This was too much for José Maria. A man might be older, yes,—but no man could tell him that this chiefest of her sex was even as other women. The rehearsing of his tribute to her had gone a little to his head, too,—as music sometimes does even to ours, though we did not make it.

"Not so," retorted José Maria. "My Father God made her on Purpose! She is like no other woman. Her very eyelashes weigh more than any other's whole entire being. Have I not seen them from above? And when she hears this song of her, then she will look up and show her teeth to him that made it. Her teeth and the eyes which see without looking."

"It may be that she will," said Trinidad calmly. "I would, if I were woman. It is a good song. If I were a woman, I would choose boys. And particularly such as spill their breath in the hole of a wild reed. So, they have less lungs for scolding. Besides, green cane is easy bent. When it grows hard enough to make even pipes, it has its own way. A man would remember this. But women,—they would rather be People to one Captain than Captain to a thousand people."

"To make even pipes?" echoed José Maria angrily. "But that is only envy. For her, I tell thee she is different. She is Master. When she lifts her eyes, she will command."

Trinidad grunted. "She waits," he added dryly, "for a Man who can make her lift her eyes unawares, and drop them against her will."

Upon the heels of the slur to his pipes, this dissection of his ideal undid José Maria. He whopped to his feet, his temples knotting, his eyes redder than the smudge of taqui had made them, his fat fists turned bony.

"Judgment between me and thee!" he cried. "For all thou art older, I defy thee! Perhaps she has given thee squashes [the mitten] for a dry old man. *Thou master her!* Now before my Father God" —

"Seat thee, son," said Trinidad, not unkindly. "And do not molest the Last Judge. The young always appeal to Him, even before going first to a justice of the peace. Even the Corregidor hath cares. If thou must have a lawsuit, let it be before not God nor Don Pepe, but let us leave it to the White Llama of the defunct Hilário. *He knows enough for this.*"

Trinidad's tone had turned mocking, and José Maria would have grown angrier yet, except for very wonder. Was this a wizard, to hit upon the selfsame llama that he had not seen, but which was now shut up like a German finger-cutter in the corral? Perhaps the hand of God was in it, busy as He must be. Surely, too, this were a friendly judge. And with a visible attempt at the tone of courtesy, he answered: "So be. I will abide the judgment of the White Llama of Don Hilário. The beast is without, — for the defunct was my father's father. But how shall we join issue?"

Trinidad lost himself for a moment in the outer seeming of thought. Of course, this youth did not realize his likeness to the deceased; nor had he any reason to note the white, long hairs upon his poncho. Then, lingeringly: —

"Mppss! I am just come from La Paz, where I sold what I had. But I can return with thee, to try the case. For it is better that She be witness. And I, too, will abide the judgment of the White

Llama of Hilário, my lamented friend. Blessed old man! And to what an age! For the priest himself told me that by the baptismal records he was fifty-seven when he was taken to God. In the morning, then." And Trinidad lay back on the earthen floor, tucking his feet up under his poncho, laying his sombrero aside but retaining his gay peaked cap, and closed his eyes with an air very few men would have ventured to question, so simple was it, yet so final.

José Maria did not venture. After a blank moment he pushed the door of llama-skin and stepped forth into the freezing dark. "Mother of me!" he muttered, "how sad a thing is Age! That chuncho must be of thirty years! By the face, that is — for his speech is cold as one older yet. He even sneered at the pipes!" Out came the slandered canes from the chuspa; and, cajoling them softly, José Maria went strolling with the night. There was no confident tootling, now. Yonder sleepy cannibal, who could not even lie awake for Her, — he would blow a tempest upon these timid reeds — if he knew enough to play them at all. "Master," eh? Nay, with burros maybe, but with women, thus, — and the chastened lover wooed the reeds so softly as no man could dream who has not heard the very wraith of a flute wandering, wondering, wailing, yearning, and despairing night-long amid the Andean solitudes.

At four of the dawn, José Maria came in. Trinidad was again persuading a little glow of taqui. He looked up and gave good-morning with no question in his voice. What to him, whether a Boy slept or went owling? José Maria had come near to the conventions by at least a grunt in response, but at this contemptuous indifference he withheld. The night had changed him. Trudging these cold hours in a world where no more was to see than the dim gray thread that meant the trail, and, halfway up the sky, those awful peaks that are whiter the more the night is black, he had dreamt a thousand nightmares. The very pipes had shared the

obsession. Among all folk-song, the yaraví is the byword of mournfulness; but the mother of yaravís would not have known this her youngest child, when José Maria dressed it for the last and twentieth time on the cumbre of Laja — and turned and pattered silently back to the tambo. Even the desiccated cane could find no latter sigh; and there had entered a new note, more suspect with each rendering. When the pipes were futile, and his feet turned back, José Maria's hand went down unconsciously to where a haft of ironwood stood above his belt. Below was a rude blade whose upper half showed diagonal lines the smith had not effaced. Perhaps he had not cared to, — it is a sort of hall-mark in lands where the smith is not yet a mere machine. Store cutlery, a rib or breast-bone may as well as not break; but when you go where a knife is Brother, beware of the converted file. Nothing will stop *that*!

But, as has been said, Trinidad was awake and compelling the breakfast fire. José Maria clumsily wedged his pipes into his chuspa, extracted the frugal bit of charqui, and held it to the intermittent glow.

Trinidad was already chewing sturdily. Still wrangling his morsel, he said: "The challenge is thine. How shall it be?"

A witch, to think so far! But José Maria gathered himself. "N—the llama — mppss, we will go first to Her, and tell her, and of the judge. Then we will see. And also" — as he noted the little mandolin he had been too preoccupied to think of before — "each shall play to her." His eyes brightened at this sheer inspiration. Get this cannibal to play his heartlessness to Her!

They grew dark soon enough as Trinidad drawled, "It is well. Two judges will be the same, — though I advised thee not to bother the gods when thy pack-beast was court enough. We will go to her, and tell. Then we will be-sing her, — thou with thine admirable pipes and new song, and I in an old verse which all know, with

my poor charongo and the mouth God forgot to better for me. But always at last the Corregidor is thy White Llama."

Though his *aparejos* had to be packed, José Maria was first away. Trinidad and his empty saddles loitered carelessly. When the younger man had set forth, Trinidad wetted the wooden key-pegs of the charongo in his mouth, and twisted a new string for one that was frayed. Then, with a slow, stretching yawn, he reached mechanically for his chew of coca, — and then laughed out loud.

When you hear any one laugh on the Puna, you may be sure it means something, — even if you do not know what it means. But Trinidad knew; and he came very near to laughing again, as he remembered his sacrifice, — a little handful of dry green leaves, which should have been his solace to-day, laid under the wistful nose of the White Llama last night, while José Maria was off vagrom with his whiffing pipes. It is a masterful bush, this of the coca. Fasting otherhow, and with only a little quid of its leaves, sprinkled with lime, a Serrano can toil all day, — and, for that matter, most of us in civilization know better how far cocaine will go than how far it has come from.

At two miles Trinidad drew in sight. José Maria was piping absently, breaking off now and again to exhort the loitering llamas when they dozed at their grazing. That is, three of them. For the White Llama was quarter of a mile ahead, his splay feet marking time, his stove-pipe neck swaying rhythmically, but never stooping for a nip.

The nimbler-walking burros came up with the piper, and drew ahead. Trinidad nodded amiably as he passed; but José Maria was busy with a new variation, and turned the mere tail of an eye. The White Llama, when they overtook him, was almost as absorbed. He puckered his long nose, indeed, as the grave burros crept past him; but forgot to spit at them after the etiquette of his kind. Trinidad shifted the pack a little, where the hitch

had gone loose; and the White Llama grunted satisfaction. In half an hour he was a mere speck behind them; and Trinidad, humming softly, drew the charongo across his breast and began to tease the strings.

By rights, they should have come to La Paz two hours better than the dawdlers; but Trinidad looked back when they passed the Pilar del Alto, where the road dives headlong from the flat Puna down into that matchless bowl in whose emerald bottom the red mosaic of La Paz is inlaid. Back at a short league, a white dot flickered; and not far behind it were brown mites in motion. Trinidad smiled briefly. "He did fear, then," he confided to the burros; and turned down the zigzag road toward the intaglio of a city fifteen hundred feet below, singing peacefully.

José Maria need not have feared. That sudden stitch in his left side, soon after the outstripping; the then impetuous assaults upon his beasts with volleys of clods, the feverish harrying of them forward with a curse and lump of earth whenever one bent toward a tuft of grass, — all this was a mere misjudgment due to youth. For Trinidad did not employ his advantage of time to "see the jury," nor to bespeak Chona, nor yet to swoop her bodily away, — as the suddenly awakened José Maria came to picture to himself. More and more, as he ran and pelted after the sluggish llamas, he saw jealous visions. This ancient chuncho, — yes, he was surely a barbarian, and very old, — but how compelling! For, strong as She was, perhaps she could not resist if this so-sure person were to say to her "Come." And the perspiring youth, by dint of clods and curses, brought his laggards to the Alto almost at the heels of the White Llama, — which still marched steady as an automaton.

Such a waste of care! For Trinidad had turned aside, paused in the plazuela del Caja de Agua, and refreshed himself with a deliberate meal from the brazier of a crone squatting there. Then he

rounded his burros into a corral, and brought them a wisp; then sauntered placidly down the precipitate street toward the Choqueyápu.

A lone white llama came slouching in to the irregular plaza before the cathedral. His sinful face was wrinkled with dust; the pack sagged uneven on his matted sides; but his head was up, and he marched straight to the shade of the tower and stood waiting for some one to discharge his load. Waited, shifted, waited — till at last three other rumpled llamas, beset by a hoarse, disheveled arriero, turned the corner of Figueroa, wavered a moment, and then, with a whistle from the larger llama, huddled down to him.

By now the veteran was out of humor. The exaltation of the coca had passed; and to stand an hour, laden, before allowed to fold his knees, — what way was that? But neither was the tardy master in benevolent mood. He had long ago exhausted the last known curse in the Aymará category, and had even so much applied a clumsy new one of his own getting that it had no further taste in the mouth. It is a hard case when there is no more relief even in swearing. But Joseph Mary's eyes burned red from out a dull map of dust and sweat, and his hands could no more hang open than can the claws of a dying owl. He was even so lost to shame as to unload the younger llamas first. For all his rage at them, a hotter hate grew unreasoning in him against this arrant scurrer. What was he in such an epidemic to get to La Paz for? What had he been doing here, all this time alone? A fine Corregidor for you! Did not judges always move slowly? And José Maria, disengaging the pack with vindictive roughness, laid it upon the top of the rest and came back freehanded to bestow a fierce kick under the belly of the beast. The White Llama laid back his ears and wrinkled his nose till all the graveyard teeth showed yellow; but thinking better, he turned his back and fell to reverie.

Trinidad, seated upon the coping not far away, did not smile. "So it is," he muttered. "A dog among lions is a lion among dogs." But his face was courteous as his tone, when he stepped forward to meet the angry man.

"Art ready?" he said.

Joseph Mary glared stupidly at him. It was a moment before he could recollect. "I am ready," he grunted. "*Ready* for anything."

"Then we will go to Her."

But Chona was not there. Her microscopic peaks of bogas and chuño were orderly in their place along the curb, — such a systematic little orography as is the first type of man's long, tacit rebuke to God who dropped mountains anyhow, and never yet made any two things quite alike, — not even twins or fools. José Maria stared at the vacant space behind them, where the sidewalk was rubbed clean; but Trinidad turned about.

"There is she," he said quietly, though a little spark leapt in his eyes. "She is cousining with la Lola." And he marched the still befuddled José Maria diagonally across the cobbled street. At the curb they drew up, and Trinidad took off his hat. The crone leered up at them, but Trinidad was looking down at Chona.

"Lady," he said in a low tone. "We are come for thee, — thy master, and thy humble slave. It is to choose between us. We will serve thee; I would command thee, — though not as one who drives beasts that cannot help themselves."

Chona looked straight up at him. A proud smile budded at her mouth, and as suddenly faded. There was yellow light in his dark eyes. The mere ghost of her glance went to José Maria. There was a glow in him, too, — but it was red. And her eyes met Trinidad's again as he went on: —

"My friend thy slave is a Musico, and he challenges that we both play to thee. But let *him* play, for he is truly skilled. Me, I have only my charongo and some old songs of those that all know who are the worse for women. With thy license,

then," — and he shook José Maria by the shoulder, — "play, lad!"

José Maria fumbled at his chuspa and brought out the pipes. He was but half himself yet. How these masterful ones ran ahead! But he rubbed the reeds across his lower lip, and took heart of that first faint whisper. His upper lip peaked out, and he plunged into the yaraví.

"Patience!" cried Trinidad softly, — for Chona began to rise. "He made this for thee only; and truly it is good. I heard it last night at the tambo."

But already Chona was looking down on them both. Even Trinidad, as his eyes had to tiptoe to her, was shaken for a moment. She towered like Illimani, whose blue-white dominance overhangs the plaza. And then he stood straighter, and kept her look. "I have heard him," she said, with a little shake of her wide shoulders. "And it is very good. Especially from some distance, as he went to play for me. As for thy charongo, — mayhap some day, when thou hast nothing to speak to me, thou wilt sing a song. I like the old songs, — the same my father sang to my mother when he desired her. But as for 'my Master,' I will think. We will have to prove it."

All this was lost on José Maria. He had fairly wakened with the pipes; and by now was in such an ecstasy of quavers that the graven crone stared back at him with tremulous jaw. Trinidad laid hand upon his shoulder — kindly, but with a suspicion of weight. "The lady says we shall not play," he explained; and turning to her, steadily, he added: "He will not have to prove; for thou knowest."

The piper turned angrily, but did not cease. He was midway toward a very climax.

"Sta - te!" said Chona imperiously, turning full upon him. "Dost not see that we are speaking? I will judge between ye, — but not to music."

Joseph Mary's jaw dropped, in the very middle of a scale. For a moment he stared into those great eyes. God! how they were dark! But even then they left

him carelessly and went back to Trinidad.

If the troubadour had been in a dream, he was awake now. There they stood, "seeing each other the eyes." The Pan's pipes dropped to the ground, and with a swift snatch at his belt, the piper sprang at Trinidad's back.

But Chona saw. Without a word, she reached over, caught the uplifted wrist in a grip that José Maria felt in his very knees, twisted the blade from him, and stuck it calmly in her girdle. Then with one stride she fetched him under the chin a backward sweep of her left arm, and sent him sprawling over the fascinated crone and her kettle of *chupe*. As José Maria scrambled to his feet, he saw that she was taller yet, her mighty chest higher, a redder touch upon her olive cheek, but she was not looking at him at all. Her gaze followed Trinidad, who — still smiling, if a little grimly — turned and stepped forth to meet the returning fury halfway, and took his windmill hands captive, and smiled back at Her. "You should not trouble," he said gravely; and then to José Maria, a little softer yet: "Son! Thus before women? Did we not come to adjudicate between us?"

José Maria frothed and twisted; but the iron hands held his hands crossed upon his breast; and his eyes wavered before Trinidad's. How young they were, now!

"To adjudicate, yes!" he grumbled. "But whom didst thou name for judge?"

Trinidad ceased to smile. "Pardon," he said to Chona. "But we are compromised to be judged by the White Llama. This our young friend appealed to God for thee, and I bade him try the courts of first instance first."

Chona's thick brows lowered. "It seems I am not worth much," she said coldly.

"Thou art worth — somewhat!" and

Trinidad looked square up to her. "But it was only to judge which of us two thou wouldst choose, — and I thought even the White Llama would know. Anyhow, both of us are sworn to abide by his ruling."

"So be," said Chona. She was still puzzled,—but an Indian never takes a "stump," and she added: "Bring us into court. I also will abide."

Trinidad turned toward the cathedral; the downcast José Maria took a step thitherward. And just then, with a little shriek, Chona came near to knocking them both over as she dashed across the street.

There, his cloven feet planted on the curb, his beastly nose deflowering the heaps of *chuño*, — there was the White Llama. He had come to judgment with a vengeance! The havoc of Chona's wares lay all about.

José Maria looked twice and fled. Trinidad caught the poacher by the long wool of its rump, and with a tremendous tug swung it head-around to the street. Chona turned upon him angrily, — but there was moisture in her eye. "Thou bringest thine own judges," she said. "But how of my mother, who looks for what I should have brought her to-night?"

Trinidad smiled gravely. "Thy mother shall never want," he said, very softly. "Nor thou. And even yonder goeth a priest to the cathedral. Shall we speak to him?"

She looked over him almost fiercely. A master, *pues!* When she might command the very Presidente! How they all purred to her! But this Man merely said "Come."

"I will think," she said, looking away. "I do not know. Perhaps to-morrow" —

But Trinidad answered quietly: "No, this very now." And Chona's eyes came back to his for a moment, and then dropped.

STRANGER THAN FICTION

BY LAFCADIO HEARN

It was a perfect West Indian day. My friend the notary and I were crossing the island by a wonderful road which wound up through tropic forest to the clouds, and thence looped down again, through gold-green slopes of cane, and scenery amazing of violet and blue and ghost-gray peaks, to the roaring coast of the trade winds. All the morning we had been ascending, — walking after our carriage, most of the time, for the sake of the brave little mule; — and the sea had been climbing behind us till it looked like a monstrous wall of blue, pansy-blue, under the ever heightening horizon. The heat was like the heat of a vapor-bath, but the air was good to breathe, with its tropical odor, — an odor made up of smells of strange saps, queer spicy scents of mould, exhalations of aromatic decay. Moreover, the views were glimpses of Paradise; and it was a joy to watch the torrents roaring down their gorges under shadows of tree-fern and bamboo.

My friend stopped the carriage before a gateway set into a hedge full of flowers that looked like pink-and-white butterflies. "I have to make a call here," he said; — "come in with me." We dismounted, and he knocked on the gate with the butt of his whip. Within, at the end of a shady garden, I could see the porch of a planter's house; beyond were rows of cocoa palms, and glimpses of yellowing cane. Presently a negro, wearing only a pair of canvas trousers and a great straw hat, came hobbling to open the gate, — followed by a multitude, an astonishing multitude, of chattering chickens. Under the shadow of that huge straw hat I could not see the negro's face; but I noticed that his limbs and body were strangely shrunken, — looked as if withered to the bone. A weirder creature

I had never beheld; and I wondered at his following of chickens.

"Eh!" exclaimed the notary, "your chickens are as lively as ever! . . . I want to see Madame Floran."

"*Moin ké di,*" the goblin responded huskily, in his patois; and he limped on before us, all the chickens hopping and cheeping at his withered heels.

"That fellow," my friend observed, "was bitten by a *fer-de-lance* about eight or nine years ago. He got cured, or at least half-cured, in some extraordinary way; but ever since then he has been a skeleton. See how he limps!"

The skeleton passed out of sight behind the house, and we waited a while at the front porch. Then a métisse — turbaned in wasp colors, and robed in iris colors, and wonderful to behold — came to tell us that Madame hoped we would rest ourselves in the garden, as the house was very warm. Chairs and a little table were then set for us in a shady place, and the métisse brought out lemons, sugar-syrup, a bottle of the clear plantation rum that smells like apple juice, and ice-cold water in a *dobanne* of thick red clay. My friend prepared the refreshments; and then our hostess came to greet us, and to sit with us, — a nice old lady with hair like newly minted silver. I had never seen a smile sweeter than that with which she bade us welcome; and I wondered whether she could ever have been more charming in her Creole girlhood than she now appeared, — with her kindly wrinkles, and argent hair, and frank, black, sparkling eyes. . . .

In the conversation that followed I was not able to take part, as it related only to some question of title. The notary soon arranged whatever there was to arrange;