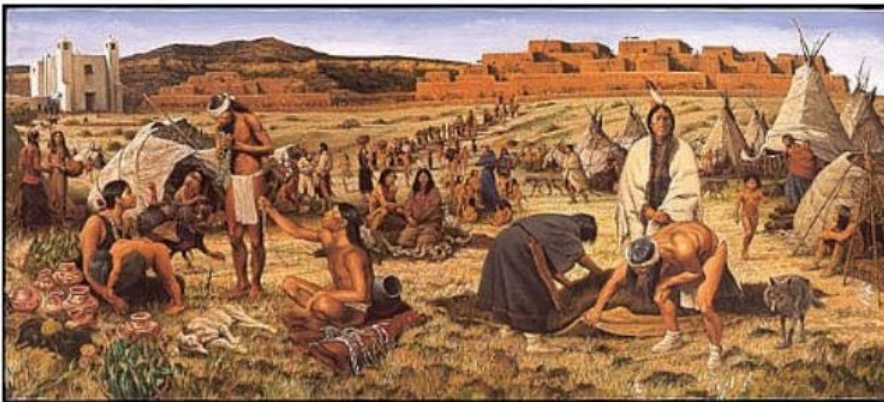


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### General Setting:



Excerpts from the National Park Service website of Pecos National Historical Park, New Mexico:



*Pecos Pueblo and other natives gathering in front of the pueblo grounds for trading. This painting is a scene of the Pecos Pueblo before the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.*

*HFC Commissioned Art Collection*

“Pecos Indians remained Puebloan in culture, despite cultural blendings, practicing an ancient agricultural tradition borne north from Mexico by the seeds of sacred corn. By the late Pueblo period, the last few centuries before the Spaniards arrived in the Southwest, people in this valley had congregated in multi-storied towns overlooking the streams and fields that nourished their crops. In the 1400s, these groups gathered into **Pecos pueblo, which became a regional power.**

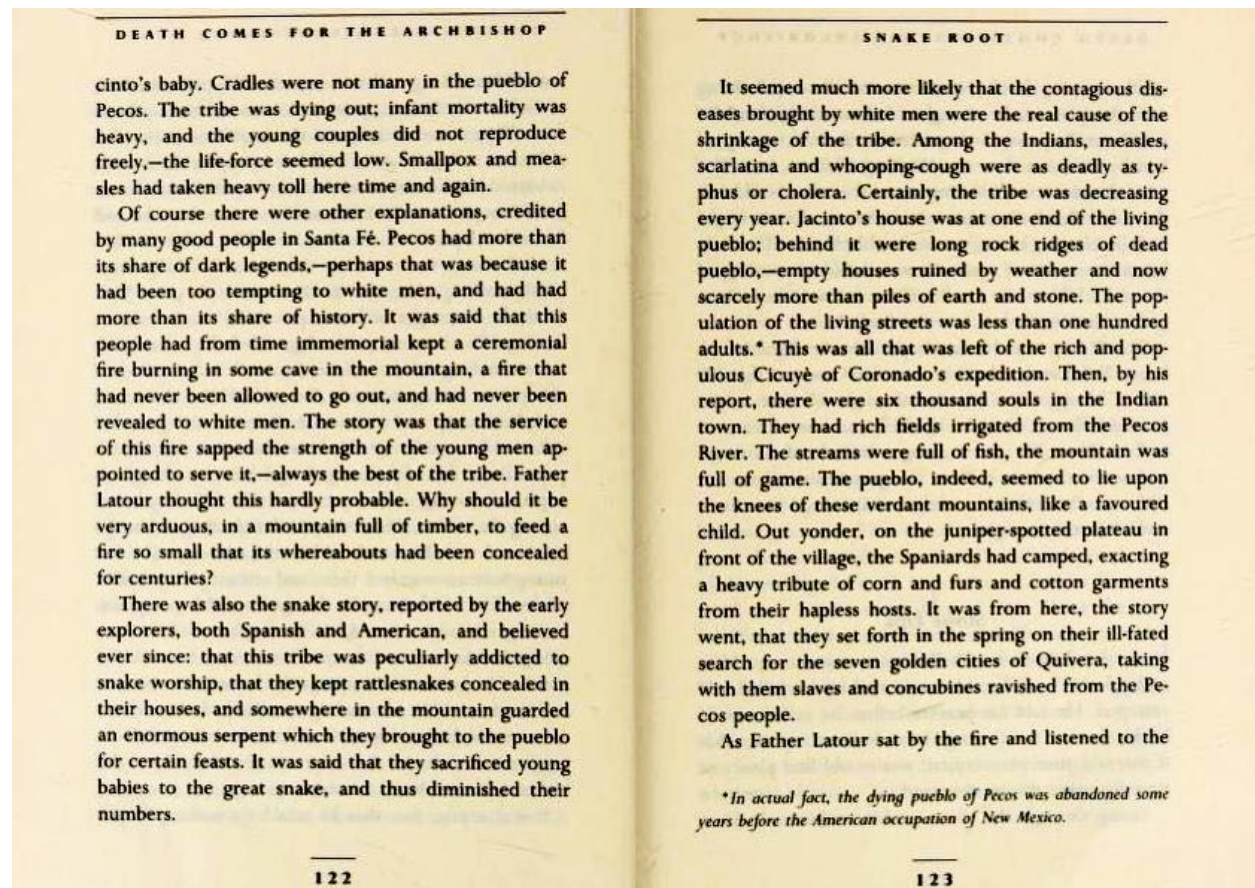
“Fine-tuned adjustments to their natural and cultivated world rested on practical science infused with spirituality. By story and dance, tradition-bearers conveyed the knowledge and wisdom of centuries past. Individual, family, and social life were regulated via a religion binding all things together and holding balance, harmony, and fitness as the highest ideals. But ideals did not always prevail. **Warfare between Pueblo groups was common.** The frontier people of Pecos had to be vigilant with nomadic Plains Indians, whose intent--trade or war--could be unpredictable.”

**Encyclopedia.com "Introduction" to the novel:**

"Published in 1927 in New York, Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop* is based on the actual lives of Archbishop Lamy, the first bishop of New Mexico, and his vicar, Father Joseph Machebeuf. Both men were from France. When Cather came across Father Joseph Howlett's biography of Machebeuf (published in 1908), she was inspired by the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of pioneer priests and missionaries in New Mexico. Howlett's biography included letters Machebeuf wrote home to his sister, a nun. In *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, Lamy becomes Bishop Jean Marie Latour, and Machebeuf becomes Father Joseph Vaillant. Although the novel is based on historical figures and information, the bulk of the book is fictionalized. Without the factual information and the insights of Machebeuf's biography, however, Cather may not have been inspired to write the book, nor would she likely have been able to construct such believable, complex characters.

"Set in the second half of the nineteenth century, *Death Comes for the Archbishop* spans almost forty years in the life of Bishop Latour. It is an episodic narrative that shows how the French priest gradually wins the trust and respect of the natives, and brings order to the Catholic Church in the Southwest. The novel is peopled with numerous minor characters who function to represent and relate the culture, folklore, history, and belief systems of the Mexican and Indian people in New Mexico. The novel is also known for its rich descriptions of landscape and its role in the lives of the people who live among it."

**From *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, Book Four ("Snake Root"), Chapter 1 ("The Night at Pecos"):**





wind sweeping down from the mountains and howling over the plateau, he thought of these things; and he could not help wondering whether Jacinto, sitting silent by the same fire, was thinking of them, too. The wind, he knew, was blowing out of the inky cloud bank that lay behind the mountain at sunset; but it might well be blowing out of a remote, black past. The only human voice raised against it was the feeble wailing of the sick child in the cradle. Clara ate noiselessly in a corner, Jacinto looked into the fire.

The Bishop read his breviary by the fire-light for an hour. Then, warmed to the bone and assured that his roll of blankets was warmed through, he rose to go. Jacinto followed with the blankets and one of his own buffalo robes. They went along a line of red doorways and across the bare rock to the gaunt ruin, whose lateral walls, with their buttresses, still braved the storm and let in the starlight.

## 2

## Stone Lips

It was not difficult for the Bishop to waken early. After midnight his body became more and more chilled and cramped. He said his prayers before he rolled out of his blankets, remembering Father Vaillant's maxim that if you said your prayers first, you would find plenty of time for other things afterward.

Going through the silent pueblo to Jacinto's door,

the Bishop woke him and asked him to make a fire. While the Indian went to get the mules ready, Father Latour got his coffee-pot and tin cup out of his saddle-bags, and a round loaf of Mexican bread. With bread and black coffee, he could travel day after day. Jacinto was for starting without breakfast, but Father Latour made him sit down and share his loaf. Bread is never too plenty in Indian households. Clara was still lying on the settle with her baby.

At four o'clock they were on the road, Jacinto riding the mule that carried the blankets. He knew the trails through his own mountains well enough to follow them in the dark. Toward noon the Bishop suggested a halt to rest the mules, but his guide looked at the sky and shook his head. The sun was nowhere to be seen, the air was thick and grey and smelled of snow. Very soon the snow began to fall—lightly at first, but all the while becoming heavier. The vista of pine trees ahead of them grew shorter and shorter through the vast powdering of descending flakes. A little after mid-day a burst of wind sent the snow whirling in coils about the two travellers, and a great storm broke. The wind was like a hurricane at sea, and the air became blind with snow. The Bishop could scarcely see his guide—saw only parts of him, now a head, now a shoulder, now only the black rump of his mule. Pine trees by the way stood out for a moment, then disappeared absolutely in the whirlpool of snow. Trail and landmarks, the mountain itself, were obliterated.

Jacinto sprang from his mule and unstrapped the roll of blankets. Throwing the saddle-bags to the Bishop, he shouted, "Come, I know a place. Be quick, Padre."

The Bishop protested they could not leave the mules. Jacinto said the mules must take their chance.

For Father Latour the next hour was a test of endurance. He was blind and breathless, panting through his open mouth. He clambered over half-visible rocks, fell over prostrate trees, sank into deep holes and struggled out, always following the red blankets on the shoulders of the Indian boy, which stuck out when the boy himself was lost to sight.

Suddenly the snow seemed thinner. The guide stopped short. They were standing, the Bishop made out, under an overhanging wall of rock which made a barrier against the storm. Jacinto dropped the blankets from his shoulder and seemed to be preparing to climb the cliff. Looking up, the Bishop saw a peculiar formation in the rocks; two rounded ledges, one directly over the other, with a mouthlike opening between. They suggested two great stone lips, slightly parted and thrust outward. Up to this mouth Jacinto climbed quickly by footholds well known to him. Having mounted, he lay down on the lower lip, and helped the Bishop to clamber up. He told Father Latour to wait for him on this projection while he brought up the baggage.

A few moments later the Bishop slid after Jacinto

and the blankets, through the orifice, into the throat of the cave. Within stood a wooden ladder, like that used in kivas, and down this he easily made his way to the floor.

He found himself in a lofty cavern, shaped somewhat like a Gothic chapel, of vague outline,—the only light within was that which came through the narrow aperture between the stone lips. Great as was his need of shelter, the Bishop, on his way down the ladder, was struck by a reluctance, an extreme distaste for the place. The air in the cave was glacial, penetrated to the very bones, and he detected at once a fetid odour, not very strong but highly disagreeable. Some twenty feet or so above his head the open mouth let in grey daylight like a high transom.

While he stood gazing about, trying to reckon the size of the cave, his guide was intensely preoccupied in making a careful examination of the floor and walls. At the foot of the ladder lay a heap of half-burned logs. There had been a fire there, and it had been extinguished with fresh earth,—a pile of dust covered what had been the heart of the fire. Against the cavern wall was a heap of piñon faggots, neatly piled. After he had made a minute examination of the floor, the guide began cautiously to move this pile of wood, taking the sticks up one by one, and putting them in another spot. The Bishop supposed he would make a fire at once, but he seemed in no haste to do so. Indeed, when he



had moved the wood he sat down upon the floor and fell into reflection. Father Latour urged him to build a fire without further delay.

"Padre," said the Indian boy, "I do not know if it was right to bring you here. This place is used by my people for ceremonies and is known only to us. When you go out from here, you must forget."

"I will forget, certainly. But unless we can have a fire, we had better go back into the storm. I feel ill here already."

Jacinto unrolled the blankets and threw the driest one about the shivering priest. Then he bent over the pile of ashes and charred wood, but what he did was to select a number of small stones that had been used to fence in the burning embers. These he gathered in his *sarape* and carried to the rear wall of the cavern, where, a little above his head, there seemed to be a hole. It was about as large as a very big watermelon, of an irregular oval shape.

Holes of that shape are common in the black volcanic cliffs of the Pajarito Plateau, where they occur in great numbers. This one was solitary, dark, and seemed to lead into another cavern. Though it lay higher than Jacinto's head, it was not beyond easy reach of his arms, and to the Bishop's astonishment he began deftly and noiselessly to place the stones he had collected within the mouth of this orifice, fitting them together until he had entirely closed it. He then cut wedges from the piñon faggots and inserted them into the

cracks between the stones. Finally, he took a handful of the earth that had been used to smother the dead fire, and mixed it with the wet snow that had blown in between the stone lips. With this thick mud he plastered over his masonry, and smoothed it with his palm. The whole operation did not take a quarter of an hour.

Without comment or explanation he then proceeded to build a fire. The odour so disagreeable to the Bishop soon vanished before the fragrance of the burning logs. The heat seemed to purify the rank air at the same time that it took away the deathly chill, but the dizzy noise in Father Latour's head persisted. At first he thought it was a vertigo, a roaring in his ears brought on by cold and changes in his circulation. But as he grew warm and relaxed, he perceived an extraordinary vibration in this cavern; it hummed like a hive of bees, like a heavy roll of distant drums. After a time he asked Jacinto whether he, too, noticed this. The slim Indian boy smiled for the first time since they had entered the cave. He took up a faggot for a torch, and beckoned the Padre to follow him along a tunnel which ran back into the mountain, where the roof grew much lower, almost within reach of the hand. There Jacinto knelt down over a fissure in the stone floor, like a crack in china, which was plastered up with clay. Digging some of this out with his hunting knife, he put his ear on the opening, listened a few seconds, and motioned the Bishop to do likewise.

Father Latour lay with his ear to this crack for a

long while, despite the cold that arose from it. He told himself he was listening to one of the oldest voices of the earth. What he heard was the sound of a great underground river, flowing through a resounding cavern. The water was far, far below, perhaps as deep as the foot of the mountain, a flood moving in utter blackness under ribs of antediluvian rock. It was not a rushing noise, but the sound of a great flood moving with majesty and power.

"It is terrible," he said at last, as he rose.

"Si, Padre." Jacinto began spitting on the clay he had gouged out of the seam, and plastered it up again.

When they returned to the fire, the patch of daylight up between the two lips had grown much paler. The Bishop saw it die with regret. He took from his saddlebags his coffee-pot and a loaf of bread and a goat cheese. Jacinto climbed up to the lower ledge of the entrance, shook a pine tree, and filled the coffee-pot and one of the blankets with fresh snow. While his guide was thus engaged, the Bishop took a swallow of old Taos whisky from his pocket flask. He never liked to drink spirits in the presence of an Indian.

Jacinto declared that he thought himself lucky to get bread and black coffee. As he handed the Bishop back his tin cup after drinking its contents, he rubbed his hand over his wide sash with a smile of pleasure that showed all his white teeth.

"We had good luck to be near here," he said. "When we leave the mules, I think I can find my way here,

but I am not sure. I have not been here very many times. You was scare, Padre?"

The Bishop reflected, "You hardly gave me time to be scared, boy. Were you?"

The Indian shrugged his shoulders. "I think not to return to pueblo," he admitted.

Father Latour read his breviary long by the light of the fire. Since early-morning his mind had been on other than spiritual things. At last he felt that he could sleep. He made Jacinto repeat a *Pater Noster* with him, as he always did on their night camps, rolled himself in his blankets, and stretched out, feet to the fire. He had it in his mind, however, to waken in the night and study a little the curious hole his guide had so carefully closed. After he put on the mud, Jacinto had never looked in the direction of that hole again, and Father Latour, observing Indian good manners, had tried not to glance toward it.

He did waken, and the fire was still giving off a rich glow of light in that lofty Gothic chamber. But there against the wall was his guide, standing on some invisible foothold, his arms outstretched against the rock, his body flattened against it, his ear over that patch of fresh mud, listening; listening with supersensual ear, it seemed, and he looked to be supported against the rock by the intensity of his solicitude. The Bishop closed his eyes without making a sound and wondered why he had supposed he could catch his guide asleep.

The next morning they crawled out through the



stone lips, and dropped into a gleaming white world. The snow-clad mountains were red in the rising sun. The Bishop stood looking down over ridge after ridge of wintry fir trees with the tender morning breaking over them, all their branches laden with soft, rose-coloured clouds of virgin snow.

Jacinto said it would not be worth while to look for the mules. When the snow melted, he would recover the saddles and bridles. They floundered on foot some eight miles to a squatter's cabin, rented horses, and completed their journey by starlight. When they reached Father Vaillant, he was sitting up in a bed of buffalo skins, his fever broken, already on the way to recovery. Another good friend had reached him before the Bishop. Kit Carson, on a deer hunt in the mountains with two Taos Indians, had heard that this village was stricken and that the Vicario was there. He hurried to the rescue, and got into the pueblo with a pack of venison meat just before the storm broke. As soon as Father Vaillant could sit in the saddle, Carson and the Bishop took him back to Santa Fé, breaking the journey into four days because of his enfeebled state.

The Bishop kept his word, and never spoke of Jacinto's cave to anyone, but he did not cease from wondering about it. It flashed into his mind from time to time, and always with a shudder of repugnance quite unjustified by anything he had experienced there. It had been a hospitable shelter to him in his extremity. Yet after-

ward he remembered the storm itself, even his exhaustion, with a tingling sense of pleasure. But the cave, which had probably saved his life, he remembered with horror. No tales of wonder, he told himself, would ever tempt him into a cavern hereafter.

At home again, in his own house, he still felt a certain curiosity about this ceremonial cave, and Jacinto's puzzling behaviour. It seemed almost to lend a colour of probability to some of those unpleasant stories about the Pecos religion. He was already convinced that neither the white men nor the Mexicans in Santa Fé understood anything about Indian beliefs or the workings of the Indian mind.

Kit Carson had told him that the proprietor of the trading post between Glorieta Pass and the Pecos pueblo had grown up a neighbour to these Indians, and knew as much about them as anybody. His parents had kept the trading post before him, and his mother was the first white woman in that neighborhood. The trader's name was Zeb Orchard; he lived alone in the mountains, selling salt and sugar and whisky and tobacco to red men and white. Carson said that he was honest and truthful, a good friend to the Indians, and had at one time wanted to marry a Pecos girl, but his old mother, who was very proud of being "white," would not hear of it, and so he had remained a single man and a recluse.

Father Latour made a point of stopping for the night with this trader on one of his missionary journeys, in

order to question him about the Pecos customs and ceremonies.

Orchard said that the legend about the undying fire was unquestionably true; but it was kept burning, not in the mountain, but in their own pueblo. It was a smothered fire in a clay oven, and had been burning in one of the kivas ever since the pueblo was founded, centuries ago. About the snake stories, he was not certain. He had seen rattlesnakes around the pueblo, to be sure, but there were rattlers everywhere. A Pecos boy had been bitten on the ankle some years ago, and had come to him for whisky, he swelled up and was very sick, like any other boy.

The Bishop asked Orchard if he thought it probable that the Indians kept a great serpent in concealment somewhere, as was commonly reported.

"They do keep some sort of varmint out in the mountain, that they bring in for their religious ceremonies," the trader said. "But I don't know if it's a snake or not. No white man knows anything about Indian religion, Padre."

As they talked further, Orchard admitted that when he was a boy he had been very curious about these snake stories himself, and once, at their festival time, he had spied on the Pecos men, though that was not a very safe thing to do. He had lain in ambush for two nights on the mountain, and he saw a party of Indians bringing in a chest by torch-light. It was about the size of a woman's trunk, and it was heavy enough to bend

the young aspen poles on which it was hung. "If I'd seen white men bringing in a chest after dark," he observed, "I could have made a guess at what was in it; money, or whisky, or fire-arms. But seeing it was Indians, I can't say. It might have been only queer-shaped rocks their ancestors had taken a notion to. The things they value most are worth nothing to us. They've got their own superstitions, and their minds will go round and round in the same old ruts till Judgment Day."

Father Latour remarked that their veneration for old customs was a quality he liked in the Indians, and that it played a great part in his own religion.

The trader told him he might make good Catholics among the Indians, but he would never separate them from their own beliefs. "Their priests have their own kind of mysteries. I don't know how much of it is real and how much is made up. I remember something that happened when I was a little fellow. One night a Pecos girl, with her baby in her arms, ran into the kitchen here and begged my mother to hide her until after the festival, for she'd seen signs between the *caciques*, and was sure they were going to feed her baby to the snake. Whether it was true or not, she certainly believed it, poor thing, and Mother let her stay. It made a great impression on me at the time."



the church where the Bishop made his first Communion, with a grove of flat-cut plane trees in front, under which the market was held on Tuesdays and Fridays.

While they lingered over these memories—an indulgence they seldom permitted themselves—the two missionaries were startled by a volley of rifle-shots and blood-curdling yells without, and the galloping of horses. The Bishop half rose, but Father Joseph reassured him with a shrug.

"Do not discompose yourself. The same thing happened here on the eve of All Souls' Day. A band of drunken cowboys, like those who came into the church last night, go out to the pueblo and get the Tesuque Indian boys drunk, and then they ride in to serenade the soldiers at the Fort in this manner."

4

A Bell and a Miracle

On the morning after the Bishop's return from Durango, after his first night in his Episcopal residence, he had a pleasant awakening from sleep. He had ridden into the court-yard after nightfall, having changed horses at a *rancho* and pushed on nearly sixty miles in order to reach home. Consequently he slept late the next morning—did not awaken until six o'clock, when he heard the Angelus ringing. He recovered consciousness slowly, unwilling to let go of a pleasing delusion that he was in Rome. Still half believing that he was

lodged near St. John Lateran, he yet heard every stroke of the Ave Maria bell, marvelling to hear it rung correctly (nine quick strokes in all, divided into threes, with an interval between); and from a bell with beautiful tone. Full, clear, with something bland and suave, each note floated through the air like a globe of silver. Before the nine strokes were done Rome faded, and behind it he sensed something Eastern, with palm trees,—Jerusalem, perhaps, though he had never been there. Keeping his eyes closed, he cherished for a moment this sudden, pervasive sense of the East. Once before he had been carried out of the body thus to a place far away. It had happened in a street in New Orleans. He had turned a corner and come upon an old woman with a basket of yellow flowers; sprays of yellow sending out a honey-sweet perfume. Mimosa—but before he could think of the name he was overcome by a feeling of place, was dropped, cassock and all, into a garden in the south of France where he had been sent one winter in his childhood to recover from an illness. And now this silvery bell note had carried him farther and faster than sound could travel.

When he joined Father Vaillant at coffee, that impetuous man who could never keep a secret asked him anxiously whether he had heard anything.

"I thought I heard the Angelus, Father Joseph, but my reason tells me that only a long sea voyage could bring me within sound of such a bell."

"Not at all," said Father Joseph briskly. "I found that

remarkable bell here, in the basement of old San Miguel. They tell me it has been here a hundred years or more. There is no church tower in the place strong enough to hold it—it is very thick and must weigh close upon eight hundred pounds. But I had a scaffolding built in the churchyard, and with the help of oxen we raised it and got it swung on cross-beams. I taught a Mexican boy to ring it properly against your return."

"But how could it have come here? It is Spanish, I suppose?"

"Yes, the inscription is in Spanish, to St. Joseph, and the date is 1356. It must have been brought up from Mexico City in an ox-cart. A heroic undertaking, certainly. Nobody knows where it was cast. But they do tell a story about it: that it was pledged to St. Joseph in the wars with the Moors, and that the people of some besieged city brought all their plate and silver and gold ornaments and threw them in with the baser metals. There is certainly a good deal of silver in the bell, nothing else would account for its tone."

Father Latour reflected. "And the silver of the Spaniards was really Moorish, was it not? If not actually of Moorish make, copied from their design. The Spaniards knew nothing about working silver except as they learned it from the Moors."

"What are you doing, Jean? Trying to make my bell out an infidel?" Father Joseph asked impatiently.

The Bishop smiled. "I am trying to account for the

fact that when I heard it this morning it struck me at once as something oriental. A learned Scotch Jesuit in Montreal told me that our first bells, and the introduction of the bell in the service all over Europe, originally came from the East. He said the Templars brought the Angelus back from the Crusades, and it is really an adaptation of a Moslem custom."

Father Vaillant sniffed. "I noticed that scholars always manage to dig out something belittling," he complained.

"Belittling? I should say the reverse. I am glad to think there is Moorish silver in your bell. When we first came here, the one good workman we found in Santa Fé was a silversmith. The Spaniards handed on their skill to the Mexicans, and the Mexicans have taught the Navajos to work silver; but it all came from the Moors."

"I am no scholar, as you know," said Father Vaillant rising. "And this morning we have many practical affairs to occupy us. I have promised that you will give an audience to a good old man, a native priest from the Indian mission at Santa Clara, who is returning from Mexico. He has just been on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe and has been much edified. He would like to tell you the story of his experience. It seems that ever since he was ordained he has desired to visit the shrine. During your absence I have found how particularly precious is that shrine to all Catholics in New Mexico. They regard it as the one



absolutely authenticated appearance of the Blessed Virgin in the New World, and a witness of Her affection for Her Church on this continent."

The Bishop went into his study, and Father Vaillant brought in Padre Escolastico Herrera, a man of nearly seventy, who had been forty years in the ministry, and had just accomplished the pious desire of a lifetime. His mind was still full of the sweetness of his late experience. He was so rapt that nothing else interested him. He asked anxiously whether perhaps the Bishop would have more leisure to attend to him later in the day. But Father Latour placed a chair for him and told him to proceed.

The old man thanked him for the privilege of being seated. Leaning forward, with his hands locked between his knees, he told the whole story of the miraculous appearance, both because it was so dear to his heart, and because he was sure that no "American" Bishop would have heard of the occurrence as it was, though at Rome all the details were well known and two Popes had sent gifts to the shrine.

On Saturday, December 9th, in the year 1531, a poor neophyte of the monastery of St. James was hurrying down Tapeyac hill to attend Mass in the City of Mexico. His name was Juan Diego and he was fifty-five years old. When he was half way down the hill a light shone in his path, and the Mother of God appeared to

him as a young woman of great beauty, clad in blue and gold. She greeted him by name and said:

"Juan, seek out thy Bishop and bid him build a church in my honour on the spot where I now stand. Go then, and I will bide here and await thy return."

Brother Juan ran into the City and straight to the Bishop's palace, where he reported the matter. The Bishop was Zumarraga, a Spaniard. He questioned the monk severely and told him he should have required a sign of the Lady to assure him that she was indeed the Mother of God and not some evil spirit. He dismissed the poor brother harshly and set an attendant to watch his actions.

Juan went forth very downcast and repaired to the house of his uncle, Bernardino, who was sick of a fever. The two succeeding days he spent in caring for this aged man who seemed at the point of death. Because of the Bishop's reproof he had fallen into doubt, and did not return to the spot where the Lady said She would await him. On Tuesday he left the City to go back to his monastery to fetch medicines for Bernardino, but he avoided the place where he had seen the vision and went by another way.

Again he saw a light in his path and the Virgin appeared to him as before, saying, "Juan, why goest thou by this way?"

Weeping, he told Her that the Bishop had distrusted his report, and that he had been employed in caring

for his uncle, who was sick unto death. The Lady spoke to him with all comfort, telling him that his uncle would be healed within the hour, and that he should return to Bishop Zumarraga and bid him build a church where She had first appeared to him. It must be called the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, after Her dear shrine of that name in Spain. When Brother Juan replied to Her that the Bishop required a sign, She said: "Go up on the rocks yonder, and gather roses."

Though it was December and not the season for roses, he ran up among the rocks and found such roses as he had never seen before. He gathered them until he had filled his *tilma*. The *tilma* was a mantle worn only by the very poor,—a wretched garment loosely woven of coarse vegetable fibre and sewn down the middle. When he returned to the apparition, She bent over the flowers and took pains to arrange them, then closed the ends of the *tilma* together and said to him:

"Go now, and do not open your mantle until you open it before your Bishop."

Juan sped into the City and gained admission to the Bishop, who was in council with his Vicar.

"Your Grace," he said, "the Blessed Lady who appeared to me has sent you these roses for a sign."

At this he held up one end of his *tilma* and let the roses fall in profusion to the floor. To his astonishment, Bishop Zumarraga and his Vicar instantly fell upon their knees among the flowers. On the inside of his poor mantle was a painting of the Blessed Virgin, in robes

of blue and rose and gold, exactly as She had appeared to him upon the hillside.

A shrine was built to contain this miraculous portrait, which since that day has been the goal of countless pilgrimages and has performed many miracles.

Of this picture Padre Escolastico had much to say: he affirmed that it was of marvellous beauty, rich with gold, and the colours as pure and delicate as the tints of early morning. Many painters had visited the shrine and marvelled that paint could be laid at all upon such poor and coarse material. In the ordinary way of nature, the flimsy mantle would have fallen to pieces long ago. The Padre modestly presented Bishop Latour and Father Joseph with little medals he had brought from the shrine; on one side a relief of the miraculous portrait, on the other an inscription: *Non fecit taliter omni nationi. (She hath not dealt so with any nation.)*

Father Vaillant was deeply stirred by the priest's recital, and after the old man had gone he declared to the Bishop that he meant himself to make a pilgrimage to this shrine at the earliest opportunity.

"What a priceless thing for the poor converts of a savage country!" he exclaimed, wiping his glasses, which were clouded by his strong feeling. "All these poor Catholics who have been so long without instruction have at least the reassurance of that visitation. It is a household word with them that their Blessed Mother revealed Herself in their own country, to a

poor convert. Doctrine is well enough for the wise, Jean; but the miracle is something we can hold in our hands and love."

Father Vaillant began pacing restlessly up and down as he spoke, and the Bishop watched him, musing. It was just this in his friend that was dear to him. "Where there is great love there are always miracles," he said at length. "One might almost say that an apparition is human vision corrected by divine love. I do not see you as you really are, Joseph; I see you through my affection for you. The Miracles of the Church seem to me to rest not so much upon faces or voices or healing power coming suddenly near to us from afar off, but upon our perceptions being made finer, so that for a moment our eyes can see and our ears can hear what is there about us always."



**From Death Comes for the Archbishop, Book Two ("Missionary Journeys"),  
Chapter 2 ('The Lonely Road to Mora'):**

(On the True Church as refuge from oppressors and friend to the honorable)

DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP

"Only a burro." Father Vaillant was relying upon the protection of St. Joseph, whose office he had fervently said that morning. The warning given them by that poor woman, with such scant opportunity, seemed evidence that some protecting power was mindful of them.

By the time they had ascended the far side of the arroyo, night had closed down and the rain was pouring harder than ever.

"I am by no means sure that we can keep in the road," said the Bishop. "But at least I am sure we are not being followed. We must trust to these intelligent beasts. Poor woman! He will suspect her and abuse her, I am afraid." He kept seeing her in the darkness as he rode on, her face in the fire-light, and her terrible pantomime.

They reached the town of Mora a little after midnight. The Padre's house was full of refugees, and two of them were put out of a bed in order that the Bishop and his Vicar could get into it.

In the morning a boy came from the stable and reported that he had found a crazy woman lying in the straw, and that she begged to see the two Padres who owned the white mules. She was brought in, her clothing cut to rags, her legs and face and even her hair so plastered with mud that the priests could scarcely recognize the woman who had saved their lives the night before.

She said she had never gone back to the house at

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DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP

marriage with an American meant coming up in the world. She had married him six years ago, and had been living with him ever since in that wretched house on the Mora trail. During that time he had robbed and murdered four travellers who had stopped there for the night. They were all strangers, not known in the country. She had forgot their names, but one was a German boy who spoke very little Spanish and little English; a nice boy with blue eyes, and she had grieved for him more than for the others. They were all buried in the sandy soil behind the stable. She was always afraid their bodies might wash out in a storm. Their horses Buck had ridden off by night and sold to Indians somewhere in the north. Magdalena had borne three children since her marriage, and her husband had killed each of them a few days after birth, by ways so horrible that she could not relate it. After he killed the first baby, she ran away from him, back to her parents at Ranchos. He came after her and made her go home with him by threatening harm to the old people. She was afraid to go anywhere for help, but twice before she had managed to warn travellers away, when her husband happened to be out of the house. This time she had found courage because, when she looked into the faces of these two Padres, she knew they were good men, and she thought if she ran after them they could save her. She could not bear any more killing. She asked nothing better than to die herself, if only she could hide near

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all. When the two priests rode away her husband had run to the house to get his gun, and she had plunged down a washout behind the stable into the arroyo, and had been on the way to Mora all night. She had supposed he would overtake her and kill her, but he had not. She reached the settlement before day-break, and crept into the stable to warm herself among the animals and wait until the household was awake. Kneeling before the Bishop she began to relate such horrible things that he stopped her and turned to the native priest.

"This is a case for the civil authorities. Is there a magistrate here?"

There was no magistrate, but there was a retired fur trapper who acted as notary and could take evidence. He was sent for, and in the interval Father Latour instructed the refugee women from Conejos to bathe this poor creature and put decent clothes on her, and to care for the cuts and scratches on her legs.

An hour later the woman, whose name was Magdalena, calmed by food and kindness, was ready to tell her story. The notary had brought along his friend, St. Vrain, a Canadian trapper who understood Spanish better than he. The woman was known to St. Vrain, moreover, who confirmed her statement that she was born Magdalena Valdez, at Los Ranchos de Taos, and that she was twenty-four years old. Her husband, Buck Scales, had drifted into Taos with a party of hunters from somewhere in Wyoming. All white men knew him for a dog and a degenerate—but to Mexican girls,

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a church and a priest for a while, to make her soul right with God.

St. Vrain and his friend got together a search-party at once. They rode out to Scales's place and found the remains of four men buried under the corral behind the stable, as the woman had said. Scales himself they captured on the road from Taos, where he had gone to look for his wife. They brought him back to Mora, but St. Vrain rode on to Taos to fetch a magistrate.

There was no *calabozo* in Mora, so Scales was put into an empty stable, under guard. This stable was soon surrounded by a crowd of people, who loitered to hear the blood-curdling threats the prisoner shouted against his wife. Magdalena was kept in the Padre's house, where she lay on a mat in the corner, begging Father Latour to take her back to Santa Fé, so that her husband could not get at her. Though Scales was bound, the Bishop felt alarmed for her safety. He and the American notary, who had a pistol of the new revolver model, sat in the *sala* and kept watch over her all night.

In the morning the magistrate and his party arrived from Taos. The notary told him the facts of the case in the plaza, where everyone could hear. The Bishop inquired whether there was any place for Magdalena in Taos, as she could not stay on here in such a state of terror.

A man dressed in buckskin hunting-clothes stepped out of the crowd and asked to see Magdalena. Father

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Latour conducted him into the room where she lay on her mat. The stranger went up to her, removing his hat. He bent down and put his hand on her shoulder. Though he was clearly an American, he spoke Spanish in the native manner.

"Magdalena, don't you remember me?"

She looked up at him as out of a dark well; something became alive in her deep, haunted eyes. She caught with both hands at his fringed buckskin knees.

"Christóbal!" she wailed. "Oh, Christóbal!"

"I'll take you home with me, Magdalena, and you can stay with my wife. You wouldn't be afraid in my house, would you?"

"No, no, Christóbal, I would not be afraid with you. I am not a wicked woman."

He smoothed her hair. "You're a good girl, Magdalena—always were. It will be all right. Just leave things to me."

Then he turned to the Bishop. "Señor Vicario, she can come to me. I live near Taos. My wife is a native woman, and she'll be good to her. That varmint won't come about my place, even if he breaks jail. He knows me. My name is Carson."

Father Latour had looked forward to meeting the scout. He had supposed him to be a very large man, of powerful body and commanding presence. This Carson was not so tall as the Bishop himself, was very slight in frame, modest in manner, and he spoke English with a soft Southern drawl. His face was both

thoughtful and alert; anxiety had drawn a permanent ridge between his blue eyes. Under his blond moustache his mouth had a singular refinement. The lips were full and delicately modelled. There was something curiously unconscious about his mouth, reflective, a little melancholy,—and something that suggested a capacity for tenderness. The Bishop felt a quick glow of pleasure in looking at the man. As he stood there in his buckskin clothes one felt in him standards, loyalties, a code which is not easily put into words but which is instantly felt when two men who live by it come together by chance. He took the scout's hand. "I have long wanted to meet Kit Carson," he said, "even before I came to New Mexico. I have been hoping you would pay me a visit at Santa Fé."

The other smiled. "I'm right shy, sir, and I'm always afraid of being disappointed. But I guess it will be all right from now on."

This was the beginning of a long friendship.

On their ride back to Carson's ranch, Magdalena was put in Father Vaillant's care, and the Bishop and the scout rode together. Carson said he had become a Catholic merely as a matter of form, as Americans usually did when they married a Mexican girl. His wife was a good woman and very devout; but religion had seemed to him pretty much a woman's affair until his last trip to California. He had been sick out there, and the Fathers at one of the missions took care of him. "I began to see things different, and thought I might some

day be a Catholic in earnest. I was brought up to think priests were rascals, and that the nuns were bad women,—all the stuff they talk back in Missouri. A good many of the native priests here bear out that story. Our Padre Martinez at Taos is an old scapegrace, if ever there was one; he's got children and grandchildren in almost every settlement around here. And Padre Lucero at Arroyo Hondo is a miser, takes everything a poor man's got to give him a Christian burial."

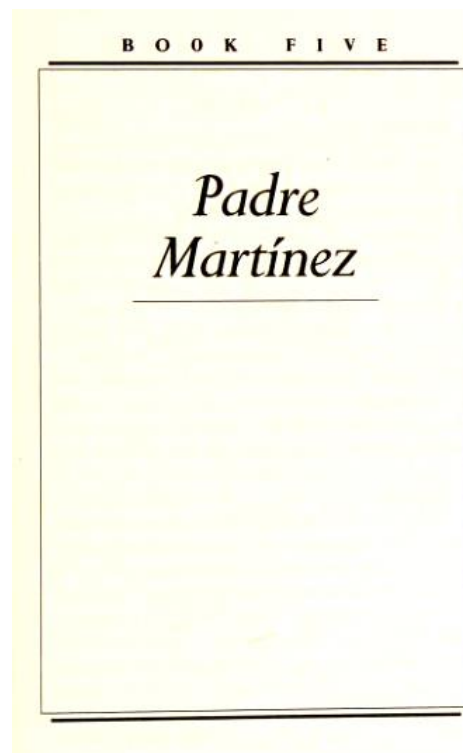
The Bishop discussed the needs of his people at length with Carson. He felt great confidence in his judgment. The two men were about the same age, both a little over forty, and both had been sobered and sharpened by wide experience. Carson had been a guide in world-renowned explorations, but he was still almost as poor as in the days when he was a beaver trapper. He lived in a little adobe house with his Mexican wife. The great country of desert and mountain ranges between Santa Fé and the Pacific coast was not yet mapped or charted; the most reliable map of it was in Kit Carson's brain. This Missourian, whose eye was so quick to read a landscape or a human face, could not read a printed page. He could at that time barely write his own name. Yet one felt in him a quick and discriminating intelligence. That he was illiterate was an accident; he had got ahead of books, gone where the printing-press could not follow him. Out of the hardships of his boyhood—from fourteen to twenty picking up a bare living as cook or mule-driver for

wagon trains, often in the service of brutal and desperate characters—he had preserved a clean sense of honour and a compassionate heart. In talking to the Bishop of poor Magdalena he said sadly: "I used to see her in Taos when she was such a pretty girl. Ain't it a pity?"

The degenerate murderer, Buck Scales, was hanged after a short trial. Early in April the Bishop left Santa Fé on horseback and rode to St. Louis, on his way to attend the Provincial Council at Baltimore. When he returned in September, he brought back with him five courageous nuns, Sisters of Loretto, to found a school for girls in letterless Santa Fé. He sent at once for Magdalena and took her into the service of the Sisters. She became housekeeper and manager of the Sisters' kitchen. She was devoted to the nuns, and so happy in the service of the Church that when the Bishop visited the school he used to enter by the kitchen-garden in order to see her serene and handsome face. For she became beautiful, as Carson said she had been as a girl. After the blight of her horrible youth was over, she seemed to bloom again in the household of God.



(On priestly cupidity, lust for power, and hedonism among indigenous tribes)



I  
The Old Order

Bishop Latour, with Jacinto, was riding through the mountains on his first official visit to Taos—after Albuquerque, the largest and richest parish in his diocese. Both the priest and people there were hostile to Americans and jealous of interference. Any European, except a Spaniard, was regarded as a gringo. The Bishop had let the parish alone, giving their animosity plenty of time to cool. With Carson's help he had informed himself fully about conditions there, and about the powerful old priest, Antonio José Martínez, who was ruler in temporal as well as in spiritual affairs. Indeed, before Father Latour's entrance upon the scene, Martínez had been dictator to all the parishes in northern New Mexico, and the native priests at Santa Fé were all of them under his thumb.

It was common talk that Padre Martínez had instigated the revolt of the Taos Indians five years ago, when Bent, the American Governor, and a dozen other white men were murdered and scalped. Seven of the Taos Indians had been tried before a military court and hanged for the murder, but no attempt had been made to call the plotting priest to account. Indeed, Padre Martínez had managed to profit considerably by the affair.

The Indians who were sentenced to death had sent for their Padre and begged him to get them out of the

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trouble he had got them into. Martínez promised to save their lives if they would deed him their lands, near the pueblo. This they did, and after the conveyance was properly executed the Padre troubled himself no more about the matter, but went to pay a visit at his native town of Abiquiú. In his absence the seven Indians were hanged on the appointed day. Martínez now cultivated their fertile farms, which made him quite the richest man in the parish.

Father Latour had had polite correspondence with Martínez, but had met him only once, on that memorable occasion when the Padre had ridden up from Taos to strengthen the Santa Fé clergy in their refusal to recognize the new Bishop. But he could see him as if that were only yesterday,—the priest of Taos was not a man one would easily forget. One could not have passed him on the street without feeling his great physical force and his imperious will. Not much taller than the Bishop in reality, he gave the impression of being an enormous man. His broad high shoulders were like a bull buffalo's, his big head was set defiantly on a thick neck, and the full-cheeked, richly coloured, egg-shaped Spanish face—how vividly the Bishop remembered that face! It was so unusual that he would be glad to see it again; a high, narrow forehead, brilliant yellow eyes set deep in strong arches, and full, florid cheeks,—not blank areas of smooth flesh, as in Anglo-Saxon faces, but full of muscular activity, as quick to change with feeling as any of his features. His mouth was the very assertion

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of violent, uncurbed passions and tyrannical self-will; the full lips thrust out and taut, like the flesh of animals distended by fear or desire.

Father Latour judged that the day of lawless personal power was almost over, even on the frontier, and this figure was to him already like something picturesque and impressive, but really impotent, left over from the past.

The Bishop and Jacinto left the mountains behind them, the trail dropped to a plain covered by clumps of very old sage-brush, with trunks as thick as a man's leg. Jacinto pointed out a cloud of dust moving rapidly toward them,—a cavalcade of a hundred men or more, Indians and Mexicans, come out to welcome their Bishop with shouting and musketry.

As the horsemen approached, Padre Martínez himself was easily distinguishable—in buckskin breeches, high boots and silver spurs, a wide Mexican hat on his head, and a great black cape wound about his shoulders like a shepherd's plaid. He rode up to the Bishop and reining in his black gelding, uncovered his head in a broad salutation, while his escort surrounded the churchmen and fired their muskets into the air.

The two priests rode side by side into Los Ranchos de Taos, a little town of yellow walls and winding streets and green orchards. The inhabitants were all gathered in the square before the church. When the Bishop dismounted to enter the church, the women threw their shawls on the dusty pathway for him to

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walk upon, and as he passed through the kneeling congregation, men and women snatched for his hand to kiss the Episcopal ring. In his own country all this would have been highly distasteful to Jean Marie Latour. Here, these demonstrations seemed a part of the high colour that was in landscape and gardens, in the flaming cactus and the gaudily decorated altars,—in the agonized Christs and dolorous Virgins and the very human figures of the saints. He had already learned that with this people religion was necessarily theatrical.

From Los Ranchos the party rode quickly across the grey plain into Taos itself, to the priest's house, opposite the church, where a great throng had collected. As the people sank on their knees, one boy, a gawky lad of ten or twelve, remained standing, his mouth open and his hat on his head. Padre Martinez reached over the heads of several kneeling women, snatched off the boy's cap, and cuffed him soundly about the ears. When Father Latour murmured in protest, the native priest said boldly:

"He is my own son, Bishop, and it is time I taught him manners."

So this was to be the tune, the Bishop reflected. His well-schooled countenance did not change a shadow as he received this challenge, and he passed on into the Padre's house. They went at once into Martinez's study, where they found a young man lying on the floor, fast asleep. He was a very large young man, very stout, lying on his back with his head pillowed on a book,

and as he breathed his bulk rose and fell amazingly. He wore a Franciscan's brown gown, and his hair was clipped short. At sight of the sleeper, Padre Martinez broke into a laugh and gave him a not very gentle kick in the ribs. The fellow got to his feet in great confusion, escaping through a door into the *patio*.

"You there," the Padre called after him, "only young men who work hard at night want to sleep in the day! You must have been studying by candle-light. I'll give you an examination in theology!" This was greeted by a titter of feminine laughter from the windows across the court, where the fugitive took refuge behind a washing hung out to dry. He bent his tall, full figure and disappeared between a pair of wet sheets.

"That was my student, Trinidad," said Martinez, "a nephew of my old friend Father Lucero, at Arroyo Hondo. He's a monk, but we want him to take orders. We sent him to the Seminary in Durango, but he was either too homesick or too stupid to learn anything, so I'm teaching him here. We shall make a priest of him one day."

Father Latour was told to consider the house his own, but he had no wish to. The disorder was almost more than his fastidious taste could bear. The Padre's study table was sprinkled with snuff, and piled so high with books that they almost hid the crucifix hanging behind it. Books were heaped on chairs and tables all over the house,—and the books and the floors were deep in the dust of spring sand-storms. Father Marti-

nez's boots and hats lay about in corners, his coats and cassocks were hung on pegs and draped over pieces of furniture. Yet the place seemed over-run by serving-women, young and old,—and by large yellow cats with full soft fur, of a special breed, apparently. They slept in the window-sills, lay on the well-curb in the *patio*; the boldest came, directly, to the supper-table, where their master fed them carelessly from his plate.

When they sat down to supper, the host introduced to the Bishop the tall, stout young man with the protruding front, who had been asleep on the floor. He said again that Trinidad Lucero was studying with him, and was supposed to be his secretary,—adding that he spent most of his time hanging about the kitchen and hindering the girls at their work.

These remarks were made in the young man's presence, but did not embarrass him at all. His whole attention was fixed upon the mutton stew, which he began to devour with undue haste as soon as his plate was put before him. The Bishop observed later that Trinidad was treated very much like a poor relation or a servant. He was sent on errands, was told without ceremony to fetch the Padre's boots, to bring wood for the fire, to saddle his horse. Father Latour disliked his personality so much that he could scarcely look at him. His fat face was irritatingly stupid, and had the grey, oily look of soft cheeses. The corners of his mouth were deep folds in plumpness, like the creases in a baby's legs, and the steel rim of his spectacles, where

it crossed his nose, was embedded in soft flesh. He said not one word during supper, but ate as if he were afraid of never seeing food again. When his attention left his plate for a moment, it was fixed in the same greedy way upon the girl who served the table—and who seemed to regard him with careless contempt. The student gave the impression of being always stupefied by one form of sensual disturbance or another.

Padre Martinez, with a napkin tied round his neck to protect his cassock, ate and drank generously. The Bishop found the food poor enough, despite the many cooks, though the wine, which came from El Paso del Norte, was very fair.

During supper, his host asked the Bishop flatly if he considered celibacy an essential condition of the priest's vocation.

Father Latour replied merely that this question had been thrashed out many centuries ago and decided once for all.

"Nothing is decided once for all," Martinez declared fiercely. "Celibacy may be all very well for the French clergy, but not for ours. St. Augustine himself says it is better not to go against nature. I find every evidence that in his old age he regretted having practised continence."

The Bishop said he would be interested to see the passages from which he drew such conclusions, observing that he knew the writings of St. Augustine fairly well.



"I have the telling passages all written down somewhere. I will find them before you go. You have probably read them with a sealed mind. Celibate priests lose their perceptions. No priest can experience repentance and forgiveness of sin unless he himself falls into sin. Since concupiscence is the most common form of temptation, it is better for him to know something about it. The soul cannot be humbled by fasts and prayer; it must be broken by mortal sin to experience forgiveness of sin and rise to a state of grace. Otherwise, religion is nothing but dead logic."

"This is a subject upon which we must confer later, and at some length," said the Bishop quietly. "I shall reform these practices throughout my diocese as rapidly as possible. I hope it will be but a short time until there is not a priest left who does not keep all the vows he took when he bound himself to the service of the altar."

The swarthy Padre laughed, and threw off the big cat which had mounted to his shoulder. "It will keep you busy, Bishop. Nature has got the start of you here. But for all that, our native priests are more devout than your French Jesuits. We have a living Church here, not a dead arm of the European Church. Our religion grew out of the soil, and has its own roots. We pay a filial respect to the person of the Holy Father, but Rome has no authority here. We do not require aid from the Propaganda, and we resent its interference. The Church the Franciscan Fathers planted here was cut off; this is

the second growth, and is indigenous. Our people are the most devout left in the world. If you blast their faith by European formalities, they will become infidels and profligates."

To this eloquence the Bishop returned blandly that he had not come to deprive the people of their religion, but that he would be compelled to deprive some of the priests of their parishes if they did not change their way of life.

Father Martinez filled his glass and replied with perfect good humour. "You cannot deprive me of mine, Bishop. Try it! I will organize my own church. You can have your French priest of Taos, and I will have the people!"

With this the Padre left the table and stood warming his back at the fire, his cassock pulled up about his waist to expose his trousers to the blaze. "You are a young man, my Bishop," he went on, rolling his big head back and looking up at the well-smoked roof poles. "And you know nothing about Indians or Mexicans. If you try to introduce European civilization here and change our old ways, to interfere with the secret dances of the Indians, let us say, or abolish the bloody rites of the Penitentes, I foretell an early death for you. I advise you to study our native traditions before you begin your reforms. You are among barbarous people, my Frenchman, between two savage races. The dark things forbidden by your Church are a part of Indian religion. You cannot introduce French fashions here."

At this moment the student, Trinidad, got up quietly, and after an obsequious bow to the Bishop, went with soft, escaping tread toward the kitchen. When his brown skirt had disappeared through the door, Father Latour turned sharply to his host.

"Martinez, I consider it very unseemly to talk in this loose fashion before young men, especially a young man who is studying for the priesthood. Furthermore, I cannot see why a young man of this calibre should be encouraged to take orders. He will never hold a parish in my diocese."

Padre Martinez laughed and showed his long, yellow teeth. Laughing did not become him; his teeth were too large—distinctly vulgar. "Oh, Trinidad will go to Arroyo Hondo as curate to his uncle, who is growing old. He's a very devout fellow, Trinidad. You ought to see him in Passion Week. He goes up to Abiquiu and becomes another man; carries the heaviest crosses to the highest mountains, and takes more scourging than anyone. He comes back here with his back so full of cactus spines that the girls have to pick him like a chicken."

Father Latour was tired, and went to his room soon after supper. The bed, upon examination, seemed clean and comfortable, but he felt uncertain of its surroundings. He did not like the air of this house. After he retired, the clatter of dish-washing and the giggling of women across the *patio* kept him awake a long while; and when that ceased, Father Martinez began snoring

in some chamber near by. He must have left his door open into the *patio*, for the adobe partitions were thick enough to smother sound otherwise. The Padre snored like an enraged bull, until the Bishop decided to go forth and find his door and close it. He arose, lit his candle, and opened his own door in half-hearted resolution. As the night wind blew into the room, a little dark shadow fluttered from the wall across the floor; a mouse, perhaps. But no, it was a bunch of woman's hair that had been indolently tossed into a corner when some slovenly female toilet was made in this room. This discovery annoyed the Bishop exceedingly.

High Mass was at eleven the next morning, the parish priest officiating and the Bishop in the Episcopal chair. He was well pleased with the church of Taos. The building was clean and in good repair, the congregation large and devout. The delicate lace, snowy linen, and burnished brass on the altar told of a devoted Altar Guild. The boys who served at the altar wore rich smocks of hand-made lace over their scarlet cassocks. The Bishop had never heard the Mass more impressively sung than by Father Martinez. The man had a beautiful baritone voice, and he drew from some deep well of emotional power. Nothing in the service was slighted, every phrase and gesture had its full value. At the moment of the Elevation the dark priest seemed to give his whole force, his swarthy body and all its blood, to that lifting-up. Rightly guided, the Bishop reflected,



this Mexican might have been a great man. He had an altogether compelling personality, a disturbing, mysterious, magnetic power.

After the confirmation service, Father Martínez had horses brought round and took the Bishop out to see his farms and live-stock. He took him all over his ranches down in the rich bottom lands between Taos and the Indian pueblo which, as Father Latour knew, had come into his possession from the seven Indians who were hanged. Martínez referred carelessly to the Bent massacre as they rode along. He boasted that there had never been trouble afoot in New Mexico that wasn't started in Taos.

They stopped just west of the pueblo a little before sunset,—a pueblo very different from all the others the Bishop had visited; two large communal houses, shaped like pyramids, gold-coloured in the afternoon light, with the purple mountain lying just behind them. Gold-coloured men in white burnouses came out on the stairlike flights of roofs, and stood still as statues, apparently watching the changing light on the mountain. There was a religious silence over the place; no sound at all but the bleating of goats coming home through clouds of golden dust.

These two houses, the Padre told him, had been continuously occupied by this tribe for more than a thousand years. Coronado's men found them there, and described them as a superior kind of Indian, handsome

and dignified in bearing, dressed in deerskin coats and trousers like those of Europeans.

Though the mountain was timbered, its lines were so sharp that it had the sculptured look of naked mountains like the Sandias. The general growth on its sides was evergreen, but the canyons and ravines were wooded with aspens, so that the shape of every depression was painted on the mountain-side, light green against the dark, like symbols; serpentine, crescent, half-circles. This mountain and its ravines had been the seat of old religious ceremonies, honeycombed with noiseless Indian life, the repository of Indian secrets, for many centuries, the Padre remarked.

"And some place in there, you may be sure, they keep Popé's estufa, but no white man will ever see it. I mean the estufa where Popé sealed himself up for four years and never saw the light of day, when he was planning the revolt of 1680. I suppose you know all about that outbreak, Bishop Latour?"

"Something, of course, from the Martyrology. But I did not know that it originated in Taos."

"Haven't I just told you that all the trouble there ever was in New Mexico originated in Taos?" boasted the Padre. "Popé was born a San Juan Indian, but so was Napoleon a Corsican. He operated from Taos."

Padre Martínez knew his country, a country which had no written histories. He gave the Bishop much the best account he had heard of the great Indian revolt of

1680, which added such a long chapter to the Martyrology of the New World, when all the Spaniards were killed or driven out, and there was not one European left alive north of El Paso del Norte.

That night after supper, as his host sat taking snuff, Father Latour questioned him closely and learned something about the story of his life.

Martínez was born directly under that solitary blue mountain on the sky-line west of Taos, shaped like a pyramid with the apex sliced off, in Abiquiú. It was one of the oldest Mexican settlements in the territory, surrounded by canyons so deep and ranges so rugged that it was practically cut off from intercourse with the outside world. Being so solitary, its people were sombre in temperament, fierce and fanatical in religion, and celebrated the Passion Week by cross-bearings and bloody scourgings.

Antonio José Martínez grew up there, without learning to read or write, married at twenty, and lost his wife and child when he was twenty-three. After his marriage he had learned to read from the parish priest, and when he became a widower he decided to study for the priesthood. Taking his clothes and the little money he got from the sale of his household goods, he started on horseback for Durango, in Old Mexico. There he entered the Seminary and began a life of laborious study.

The Bishop could imagine what it meant for a young man who had not learned to read until long after ad-

olescence, to undergo a severe academic training. He found Martínez deeply versed, not only in the Church Fathers, but in the Latin and Spanish classics. After six years at the Seminary, Martínez had returned to his native Abiquiú as priest of the parish church there. He was passionately attached to that old village under the pyramidal mountain. All the while he had been in Taos, half a lifetime now, he made periodic pilgrimages on horseback back to Abiquiú, as if the flavour of his own yellow earth were medicine to his soul. Naturally he hated the Americans. The American occupation meant the end of men like himself. He was a man of the old order, a son of Abiquiú, and his day was over.

On his departure from Taos, the Bishop went out of his way to make a call at Kit Carson's ranch house. Carson, he knew, was away buying sheep, but Father Latour wished to see the Señora Carson to thank her again for her kindness to poor Magdalena, and to tell her of the woman's happy and devoted life with the Sisters in the school at Santa Fé.

The Señora received him with that quiet but unabashed hospitality which is a common grace in Mexican households. She was a tall woman, slender, with drooping shoulders and lustrous black eyes and hair. Though she could not read, both her face and conversation were intelligent. To the Bishop's thinking, she was handsome; her countenance showed that discipline of life which he admired. She had a cheerful disposi-



tion, too, and a pleasant sense of humour. It was possible to talk confidentially to her. She said she hoped he had been comfortable in Padre Martínez's house, with an inflection which told that she much doubted it, and she laughed a little when he confessed that he had been annoyed by the presence of Trinidad Lucero.

"Some people say he is Father Lucero's son," she said with a shrug. "But I do not think so. More likely one of Padre Martínez's. Did you hear what happened to him at Abiquiú last year, in Passion Week? He tried to be like the Saviour, and had himself crucified. Oh, not with nails! He was tied upon a cross with ropes, to hang there all night; they do that sometimes at Abiquiú, it is a very old-fashioned place. But he is so heavy that after he had hung there a few hours, the cross fell over with him, and he was very much humiliated. Then he had himself tied to a post and said he would bear as many stripes as our Saviour—six thousand, as was revealed to St. Bridget. But before they had given him a hundred, he fainted. They scourged him with cactus whips, and his back was so poisoned that he was sick up there for a long while. This year they sent word that they did not want him at Abiquiú, so he had to keep Holy Week here, and everybody laughed at him."

Father Latour asked the Señora to tell him frankly whether she thought he could put a stop to the extravagances of the Penitential Brotherhood. She smiled and shook her head. "I often say to my husband, I hope you will not try to do that. It would only set the people

against you. The old people have need of their old customs; and the young ones will go with the times."

As the Bishop was taking his leave, she put into his saddle-bags a beautiful piece of lace-work for Magdalena. "She will not be likely to use it for herself, but she will be glad to have it to give to the Sisters. That brutal man left her nothing. After he was hung, there was nothing to sell but his gun and one burro. That was why he was going to take the risk of killing two Padres for their mules—and for spite against religion, maybe! Magdalena said he had often threatened to kill the priest at Mora."

At Santa Fé the Bishop found Father Vaillant awaiting him. They had not seen each other since Easter, and there were many things to be discussed. The vigour and zeal of Bishop Latour's administration had already been recognized at Rome, and he had lately received a letter from Cardinal Fransoni, Prefect of the Propaganda, announcing that the vicariate of Santa Fé had been formally raised to a diocese. By the same long-delayed post came an invitation from the Cardinal, urgently requesting Father Latour's presence at important conferences at the Vatican during the following year. Though all these matters must be taken up in their turn between the Bishop and his Vicar-General, Father Joseph had undoubtedly come up from Albuquerque at this particular time because of a lively curiosity to hear how the Bishop had been received in Taos.

Seated in the study in their old cassocks, with the candles lighted on the table between them, they spent a long evening.

"For the present," Father Latour remarked, "I shall do nothing to change the curious situation at Taos. It is not expedient to interfere. The church is strong, the people are devout. No matter what the conduct of the priest has been, he has built up a strong organization, and his people are devotedly loyal to him."

"But can he be disciplined, do you think?"

"Oh, there is no question of discipline! He has been a little potentate too long. His people would assuredly support him against a French Bishop. For the present I shall be blind to what I do not like there."

"But Jean," Father Joseph broke out in agitation, "the man's life is an open scandal, one hears of it everywhere. Only a few weeks ago I was told a pitiful story of a Mexican girl carried off in one of the Indian raids on the Costella valley. She was a child of eight when she was carried away, and was fifteen when she was found and ransomed. During all that time the pious girl had preserved her virginity by a succession of miracles. She had a medal from the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe tied round her neck, and she said such prayers as she had been taught. Her chastity was threatened many times, but always some unexpected event averted the catastrophe. After she was found and sent back to some relatives living in Arroyo Hondo, she was so devout that she wished to become a religious. She

was debauched by this Martínez, and he married her to one of his peons. She is now living on one of his farms."

"Yes, Christóbal told me that story," said the Bishop with a shrug. "But Padre Martínez is getting too old to play the part of Don Juan much longer. I do not wish to lose the parish of Taos in order to punish its priest, my friend. I have no priest strong enough to put in his place. You are the only man who could meet the situation there, and you are at Albuquerque. A year from now I shall be in Rome, and there I hope to get a Spanish missionary who will take over the parish of Taos. Only a Spaniard would be welcomed there, I think."

"You are doubtless right," said Father Joseph. "I am often too hasty in my judgments. I may do very badly for you while you are in Europe. For I suppose I am to leave my dear Albuquerque, and come to Santa Fé while you are gone?"

"Assuredly. They will love you all the more for lacking you awhile. I hope to bring some more hardy Auvergnats back with me, young men from our own Seminary, and I am afraid I must put one of them in Albuquerque. You have been there long enough. You have done all that is necessary. I need you here, Father Joseph. As it is now, one of us must ride seventy miles whenever we wish to converse about anything."

Father Vaillant sighed. "Ah, I supposed it would come! You will snatch me from Albuquerque as you



did from Sandusky. When I went there everybody was my enemy, now everybody is my friend; therefore it is time to go." Father Vaillant took off his glasses, folded them, and put them in their case, which act always announced his determination to retire. "So a year from now you will be in Rome. Well, I had rather be among my people in Albuquerque, that I can say honestly. But Clermont—there I envy you. I should like to see my own mountains again. At least you will see all my family and bring me word of them, and you can bring me the vestments that my dear sister Philomène and her nuns have been making for me these three years. I shall be very glad to have them." He rose, and took up one of the candles. "And when you leave Clermont, Jean, put a few chestnuts in your pocket for me!"

## 2

## The Miser

In February Bishop Latour once more set out on horseback over the Santa Fé trail, this time with Rome as his objective. He was absent for nearly a year, and when he returned he brought with him four young priests from his own Seminary of Montferrand, and a Spanish priest, Father Taladrid, whom he had found in Rome, and who was at once sent to Taos. At the Bishop's suggestion, Padre Martinez formally resigned his parish, with the understanding that he was still to celebrate Mass upon solemn occasions. Not only did he

avail himself of this privilege, but he continued to perform all marriages and burial services and to dictate the lives of the parishioners. Very soon he and Father Taladrid were at open war.

When the Bishop, unable to compose their differences, supported the new priest, Father Martinez and his friend Father Lucero, of Arroyo Hondo, mutinied; flatly refused to submit, and organized a church of their own. This, they declared, was the old Holy Catholic Church of Mexico, while the Bishop's church was an American institution. In both towns the greater part of the population went over to the schismatic church, though some pious Mexicans, in great perplexity, attended Mass at both. Father Martinez printed a long and eloquent Proclamation (which very few of his parishioners could read) giving an historical justification for his schism, and denying the obligation of celibacy for the priesthood. As both he and Father Lucero were well on in years, this particular clause could be of little benefit to anyone in their new organization except Trinidad. After the two old priests went off into schism, one of their first solemn acts was to elevate Father Lucero's nephew to the priesthood, and he acted as curate to them both, swinging back and forth between Taos and Arroyo Hondo.

The schismatic church at least accomplished the rejuvenation of the two rebellious priests at its head, and far and wide revived men's interest in them,—though they had always furnished their people with plenty to

talk about. Ever since they were young men with adjoining parishes, they had been friends, cronies, rivals, sometimes bitter enemies. But their quarrels could never keep them apart for long.

Old Marino Lucero had not one trait in common with Martinez, except the love of authority. He had been a miser from his youth, and lived down in the sunken world of Arroyo Hondo in the barest poverty, though he was supposed to be very rich. He used to boast that his house was as poor as a burro's stable. His bed, his crucifix, and his bean-pot were his furniture. He kept no live-stock but one poor mule, on which he rode over to Taos to quarrel with his friend Martinez, or to get a solid dinner when he was hungry. In his *casa* every day was Friday—unless one of his neighbour women cooked a chicken and brought it in to him out of pure compassion. For his people liked him. He was grasping, but not oppressive, and he wrung more pesos out of Arroyo Seco and Questa than out of his own arroyo. Thrift is such a rare quality among Mexicans that they find it very amusing; his people loved to tell how he never bought anything, but picked up old brooms after housewives had thrown them away, and that he wore Padre Martinez's garments after the Padre would have them no longer, though they were so much too big for him. One of the priests' fiercest quarrels had come about because Martinez gave some of his old clothes to a monk from Mexico who was

studying at his house, and who had not wherewithal to cover himself as winter came on.

The two priests had always talked shamelessly about each other. All Martinez's best stories were about Lucero, and all Lucero's were about Martinez.

"You see how it is," Padre Lucero would say to the young men at a wedding party, "my way is better than old José Martinez's. His nose and chin are getting to be close neighbours now, and a petticoat is not much good to him any more. But I can still rise upright at the sight of a dollar. With a new piece of money in my hand I am happier than ever; and what can he do with a pretty girl but regret?"

Avarice, he assured them, was the one passion that grew stronger and sweeter in old age. He had the lust for money as Martinez had for women, and they had never been rivals in the pursuit of their pleasures. After Trinidad was ordained and went to stay with his uncle, Father Lucero complained that he had formed gross habits living with Martinez, and was eating him out of house and home. Father Martinez told with delight how Trinidad sponged upon the parish at Arroyo Hondo, and went about poking his nose into one bean-pot after another.

When the Bishop could no longer remain deaf to the rebellion, he sent Father Vaillant over to Taos to publish the warning for three weeks and exhort the two priests to renounce their heresy. On the fourth