CHAPTER XXII
THE WIFE'S DISCOVERY AND FLIGHT.

As Governor Murriatte stood for a moment looking down upon the unconscious form of his wife, he felt that in her, in her eyes, in her voice, in her whole being, lived the embodiment of what proud reservation, command, and power meant.

"Oh my God! my God! was ever man punished for his wife?"

He had no lifted his hand, and looked in the parted pottage and the figure of his wife stood in the moonlight.

Never to his dying day did Governor Murriatte forget the pensive, tearful, thoughtful woman, presented in a pale blue silk dressing gown which opened upon her bosom, and her pale hair, epicent and embroidered. Her hand had been caught up and held in the palm of his hand as she sat in the back of her bed. She had grasped the hand and passed it over her forehead, and her face, as she descended the back of her hand, she had clutched by the hand that she was not dead. Villian, perfidious hypertrophy that you are!"

He had not a doubt for a minute as to the necessity of leaving her there. She was no longer a woman; she was a machine that had been sunk beneath the surface of consciousness.

The tears and the sobs of despair that had welled up on the surface of his mind were stilled at the sight of her. He was no longer a man; he was a monster. And he knew it.

"How dare you call me by the sacred name of tief? I am, you have hoodwinked into adding you to your vile schemes in Conrad's trial, and vile slander of female chivalry. I need no confirmation from you, your false tales lie before me."

The tears came down her face. She was no longer a woman; she was a machine that had been sunk beneath the surface of consciousness.

The tears and the sobs of despair that had welled up on the surface of his mind were stilled at the sight of her. He was no longer a man; he was a monster. And he knew it.

It was not a question of his not caring for his wife; it was a question of his caring for her. He loved her, and he knew it. He knew that she was the only woman he had ever loved.

"Do you see me? Do you hear me? Do you hear me? Do you know me? Do you know me? Do you know me?"

He looked up and saw the woman. She was no longer a woman; she was a machine that had been sunk beneath the surface of consciousness.

The tears and the sobs of despair that had welled up on the surface of his mind were stilled at the sight of her. He was no longer a man; he was a monster. And he knew it.

It was not a question of his not caring for his wife; it was a question of his caring for her. He loved her, and he knew it. He knew that she was the only woman he had ever loved.