

**THE
DOOMSWOMAN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649387182

The Doomswoman by Gertrude Atherton

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

GERTRUDE ATHERTON

**THE
DOOMSWOMAN**

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME

HERMIA SUYDAM

LOS CERRITOS

MRS. PENDLETON'S FOUR-IN-HAND

THE DOOMSWOMAN

BY *Franklin*
GERTRUDE AHERTON

"For it is believed that the woman who is twin is also the woman of doom; that in her doth abide the power to heal and to curse; to give and to know the highest joy and deepest sorrow; her love exalts, her hate blasts; in her nature is iron and fire, and the fire shall melt the iron; calm is not her lot nor the lot of those whose fate is hers—and so unto the end."—*Old Spanish MSS.*



NEW YORK
TAIT, SONS & COMPANY
UNION SQUARE

[Cop. 1293]

F256
A868 do
1893.

COPYRIGHT, 1893, BY
GERTRUDE ATHERTON

[All rights reserved]

~~74698~~

YROW DIRECTORY
PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING COMPANY
NEW YORK

17051

RESEARCH LIBRARY

Go

STEPHEN FRANKLIN



THE DOOMSWOMAN.

I.

It was at Governor Alvarado's house in Monterey that Chonita first knew of Diego Estenega. I had told him much of her, but had never cared to mention the name of Estenega in the presence of an Iturbi y Moncada.

Chonita came to Monterey to stand godmother to the child of Alvarado and of her friend Doña Martina, his wife. She arrived the morning before the christening, and no one thought to tell her that Estenega was to be godfather. The house was full of girls, relatives of the young mother, gathered for the ceremony and subsequent week of festivities. Benicia, my little one, was at the rancho with Ysabel Herrera, and I was staying with the Alvarados. So many were the guests that Chonita and I slept together. We had not seen each other for a year, and had so much to say that we did not

sleep at all. She was ten years younger than I, but we were as close friends as she with her alternate frankness and reserve would permit. But I had spent several months of each year since childhood at her home in Santa Barbara, and I knew her better than she knew herself; when, later, I read her journal, I found little in it to surprise me, but much to fill and cover with shapely form the skeleton of the story which passed in greater part before my eyes.

We were discussing the frivolous mysteries of dress, if I remember aright, when she laid her hand on my mouth suddenly.

“Hush!” she said.

A caballero serenaded his lady at midnight in Monterey.

The tinkle of a guitar, the jingling of spurs, fell among the strong tones of a man's voice.

Chonita had been serenaded until she had fled to the mountains for sleep, but she crept to the foot of the bed and knelt there, her hand at her throat. A door opened, and, one by one, out of the black beyond, five white-robed forms fitted into the room. They looked like puffs of smoke from a burning moon. The heavy wooden shutters were open, and the room was filled with cold light.

The girls waltzed on the bare floor, grouped

themselves in mock-dramatic postures, then, overcome by the strange magnetism of the singer, fell into motionless attitudes, listening intently. How well I remember that picture, although I have almost forgotten the names of the girls!

In the middle of the room two slender figures embraced each other, their black hair falling loosely over their white gowns. On the window-step knelt a tall girl, her head pensively supported by her hand, a black shawl draped gracefully about her; at her feet sat a girl with head bowed to her knees. Between the two groups was a solitary figure, kneeling with hand pressed to the wall and face uplifted.

When the voice ceased I struck a match, and five pairs of little hands applauded enthusiastically. He sang them another song, then galloped away.

"It is Don Diego Estenega," said one of the girls. "He rarely sings, but I have heard him before."

"An Estenega!" exclaimed Chonita.

"Yes; of the North, thou knowest. His Excellency thinks there is no man in the Californias like him,—so bold and so smart. Thou rememberest the books that were burned by the priests when the governor was a boy, because