

**MARIQUITA:
A NOVEL**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649204274

Mariquita: a novel by John Ayscough

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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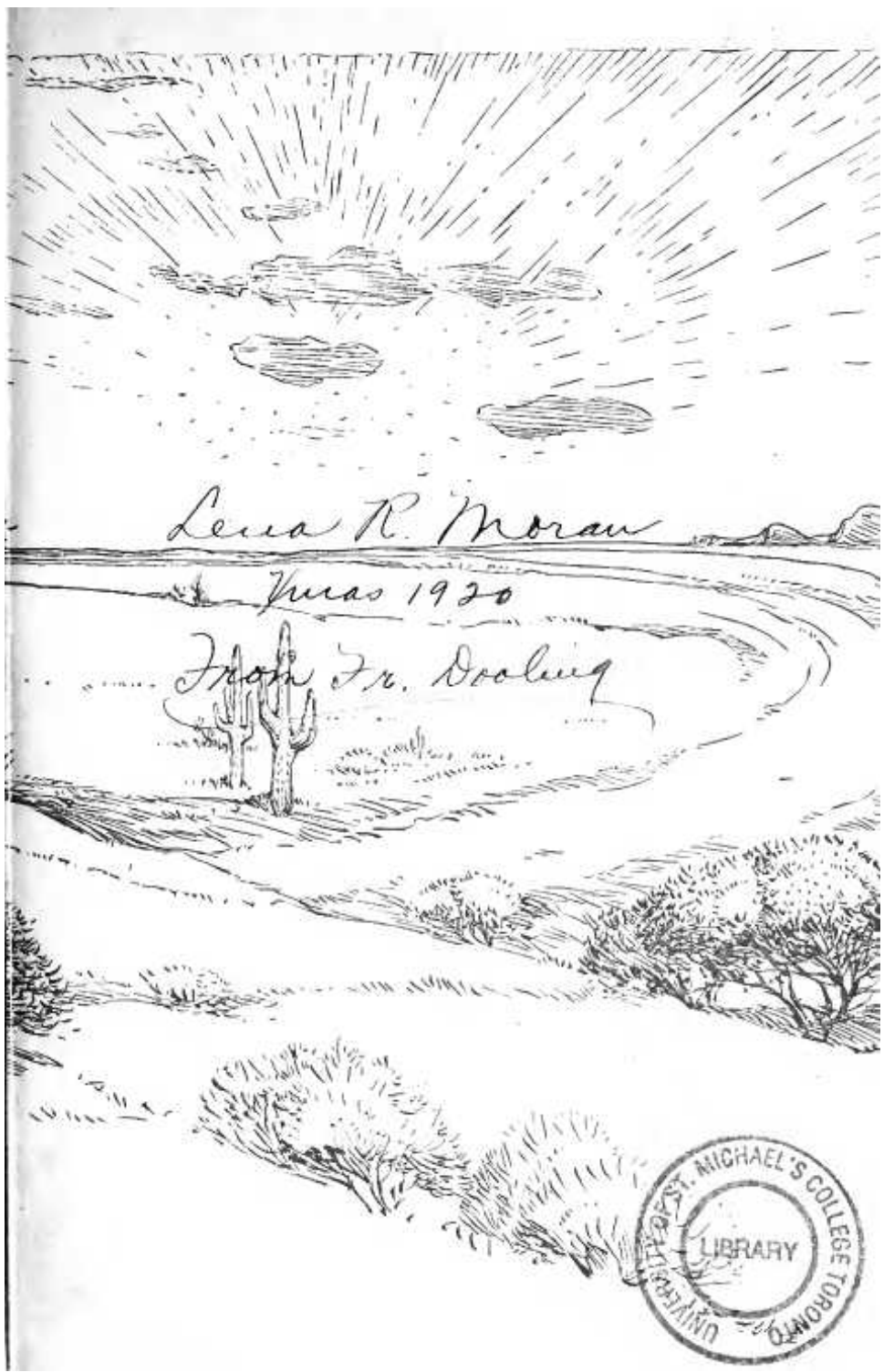
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JOHN AYSCOUGH

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A NOVEL**





Lena R. Moran

Ymas 1920

From Fr. Dooling



MARIQUITA

A Novel

BY

JOHN AYSCOUGH



NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO

BENZIGER BROTHERS

PUBLISHERS OF BENZIGER'S MAGAZINE

1922



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TO
SENORITA MARIQUITA GUTIERREZ

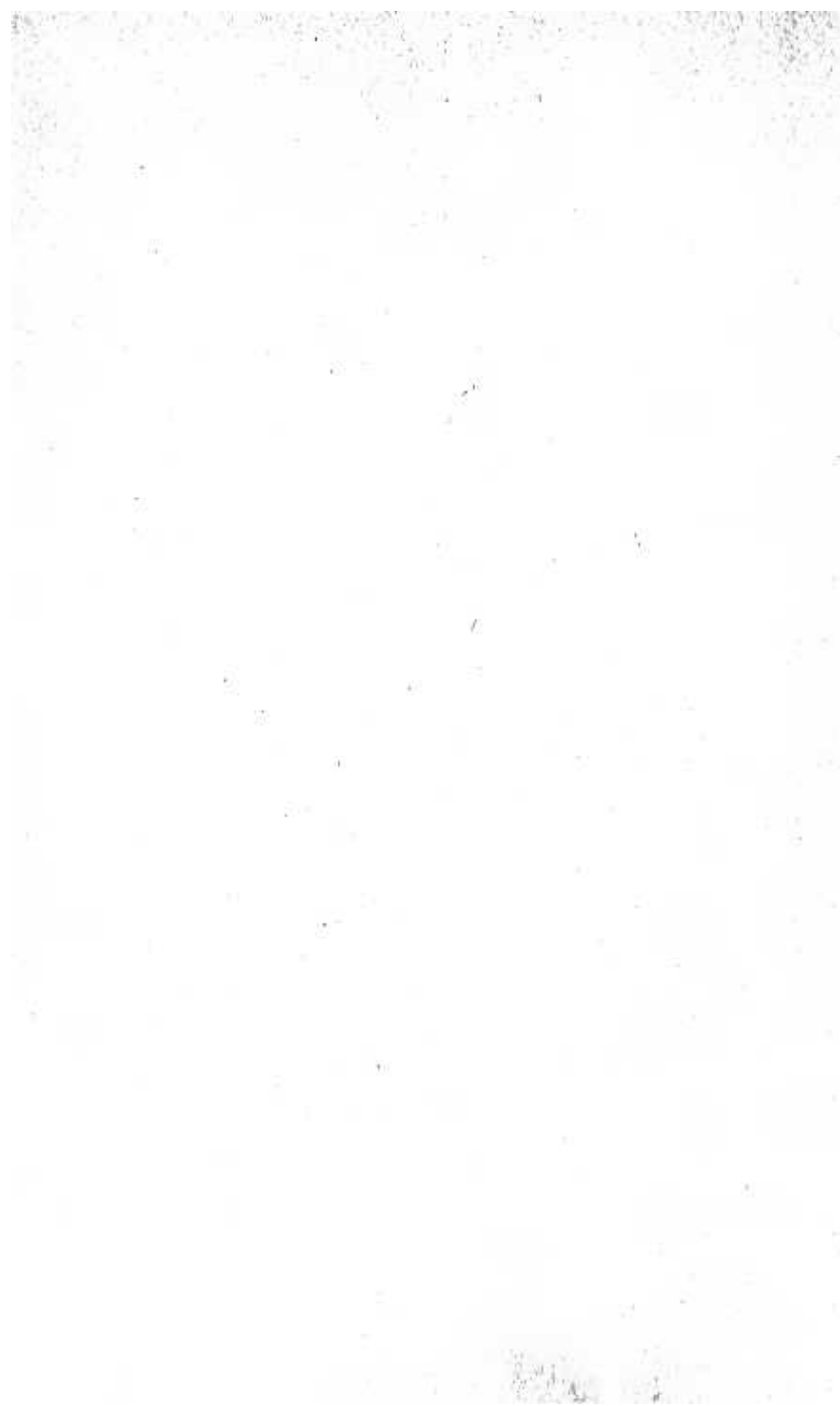
SENORITA,

It is, indeed, kind of you to condone, by your acceptance of the dedication of this small book, the theft of your name, perpetrated without your knowledge, in its title. And in thanking you for that acceptance I seize another opportunity of apologizing for that theft.

I need not tell you that in drawing Mariquita's portrait I have not been guilty of the further liberty of attempting your own, since we have never met, except on paper, and you belong to that numerous party of my friends known to me only by welcome and kind letters. But I hope there may be a nearer likelihood of my meeting you than there now can be of my seeing your namesake.

That you and some others may like her I earnestly trust: if not it must be the fault of my portrait, drawn perhaps with less skill than respectful affection.

JOHN AYSCOUGH.



MARIQUITA

CHAPTER I.

A WHOLE state, as big as England and Wales, and then half as big again, tilting smoothly upward towards, but never reaching, the Great Divide: the tilt so gradual that miles of land seem level; a vast sun-swept, breeze-swept upland always high above the level of the far, far-off sea, here in the western skirts of the state a mile above it. Its sky-scapes always equal to its landscape, and dominant—as the sky can never be imagined in shut lands of close valleys, where trees are forever at war with the air and with the light.

Here light and life seeming twin and inseparable: and the wind itself but the breathing of the light. What is called, by the foolish, a featureless country, that is with huge, fine features, not to be sought for but insistent, regnant, everywhere: space, tangible and palpable, height in-