

**MY OWN STORY**

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My own story by Joaquin Miller

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**JOAQUIN MILLER**

# **MY OWN STORY**





Yours.  
Hoag Miller.

MY  
OWN  
STORY

BY

JOAQUIN MILLER.

AUTHOR OF

"SONGS OF THE SIERRAS," "THE DANITES,"

"THE ONE FAIR WOMAN,"

"49," ETC., ETC.

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JOAQUIN MILLER  
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1872

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK  
TO  
THE DEAREST FRIEND OF MY LIFE IN THE SIERRAS  
AND  
LATER WANDERINGS IN THE OLD WORLD,  
COLONEL JAMES VAUGHN THOMAS,  
OF LEON, NICARAGUA,  
WHO IS NAMED AND KNOWN IN THESE PAGES AS  
"THE PRINCE."

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## PREFACE.

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THIS book is the story of my life among the Indians ; and yet it is not the story, not the half of it—hardly the hundredth part of it—for each day of those four years was of itself a volume. Personal peril and adventure I have left out largely, because bigger and better things are before us in the sublime scenery and the poetry and pathos of a voiceless race.

It is a marvel that the writer, with his impetuosity (want of common sense), survived even a portion of those days. For example, returning weary and half-blinded by the snow from an unsuccessful hunt, a chasm was encountered. His companions picked their way cautiously around ; but he audaciously tried to leap it. By the sheerest chance he struck a narrow ledge some twenty feet below, and was fished out by his Indian companions. But his hat and gun are still in that bottomless chasm of Mount Shasta.

Similar incidents by flood and flame, to say nothing of wild beasts and wilder men, both white and red, dot nearly every one of those eventful and most glorious days. But let us lift our faces above them.

I was living in London at the outbreak of the Modoc war, and it having become known, through the "Songs of the Sierras," that I had once lived with those people, and neighboring tribes, the writers from the seat of war gave most wild and romantic accounts of my early history.

It was said that I was the real Joaquin Murrietta, who had escaped with a price on his head to the mountains. No one seemed to understand why a man should seek to live in the heart of the Sierras for any other purpose than that of plunder. Meantime the demand for books or stories about these Indians, the Modoc war, and the cause of it, was very great in London.

To throw the fictions of these imaginative writers, and the facts as set forth in a few sketches already written, into a book, was the work of a few weeks. A war of extermination, it seemed to me, was being waged against my best friends, and it was imperative that I should strike hard and at once. And so, in great haste, and with a confusion of fact and