

**FRANCISCA  
REINA**

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Francisca Reina by Amelia Woodward Truesdell

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**AMELIA WOODWARD TRUESDELL**

**FRANCISCA  
REINA**



# Francisca Reina

BY

AMELIA WOODWARD TRUESDELL

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"La Parra Grande, a Legend of the Santa  
Barbara Grape Vine"*



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*Francisca Reina*



## FRANCISCA REINA

A stricken queen, but still a queen of queens,  
She sat upon the sloping of her hills  
Where wreck and fire had danced the dance of death.

Her forehead bowed upon her knees she sat.  
An instant stunned by her transcendent woe.  
The smoke still burnt her eyelids, and her throat  
Quivered with pungent acids of the flame.



*"Where wreck and fire had  
danced the dance of death"*

The acrid vapors of the steaming muck  
Were in her nostrils and her slackened breath  
Was spent through ashes on her bleeding lips.

A while all paralyzed, then slow her head  
Upraised. Her eyes were dim. She saw through mists  
The vista of her hills all gray and still.  
When would they laugh again? Ten thousand homes  
Had burnt their hearthstones into monuments  
For her as dead.





*"The vista of her hills . . . when would they laugh again"*

That cup unveiled she saw  
Which fate has ready for the desolate.

The black wine of despair each hour new pressed  
From envy of the nether gods. This cup,  
Scorned lightly in her pride, he thrust at her  
With coward jeers: "Drink, drink, thou boastful dame.  
Dost mock it now? There's nothing more for thee."  
Once glance! The vision came! Her spirit's light  
Broke forth in aureole about her head —  
Glory immortal of a risen soul.

Upright she stood. Hot cinders burnt her feet —  
She knew it not. With fingers tense, the cup  
She seized and, like one born to her own house,  
That black wine of despair, she tossed aloft  
Upon the embers and the blistering rocks.

"Tis not for me, a queen, this dastard draught,  
For lo! They come — my children from the sea  
Of fire — each man a king. Their garments smoke.  
Their brows deep seamed but bright with hope. Their eyes  
Are brave, their faces set to conquer death.  
My sons! my sons!" With touch of its old joy  
Her voice rang out among the blackened toms.  
"Come near, ye bruised ones. Unflinching hearts,  
Together make we sacrificial vows  
With orisons unto the rising sun."



*"Ten thousand homes had burnt their hearthstones into monuments for her as dead"*



*Francisca Dalorosa*