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Garcilaso de la Vega

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Early Visions of Florida

Poetry • Stories • Chronicles from an American Borderland

El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, La Florida

Garcilaso de la Vega, the "Inca," was born April 12th, 1539 Gómez Suárez de Figueroa. His father was conquistador-captain Sebastian Garcilaso de la Vega y Vargas; his mother was Isabel Suarez Chimpu Ocllo, an Incan princess and concubine to the Spanish captain. The mother's status as Inca princess did not prevent Sebastian Garcilaso from marrying Isabel off to a commoner, and Garcilaso de la Vega was one of the first Peruvian mestizos. Both sides of the family took care to ensure that he was exposed to the traditions of their respective cultures.

At twenty-one years of age, with an inheritance from his father, the future author traveled to Spain. Later financial and political difficulties kept him from returning to the New World, and he would focus his energies for the remainder of his life on writing, eventually publishing several important historical chronicles. He translated Leon Hebreo's philosophical treatise on Platonic love, Dialoghi d'amore, into Spanish as well as authoring the Comentarios Reales de los Incas, where he writes of indigenous culture through the eyes of a Spanish educated mestizo. He also published The Florida of the Inca (La Florida del Inca) in 1605 (excerpted below), Garcilaso's account of the De Soto expedition, which contains quite a bit of elaboration. He often interjects with his own personal story in an attempt to add depth or reason for Native or Spanish motives. Although not held as the most reliable account of the expedition, it is often considered the most detailed and dramatic.

Edited by Amelia Zimmerman, University of South Florida St. Petersburg

Suggested Reading

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Chapter 1: The Governor arrives in Florida and finds traces of Pamphilo de Narvaez

Governor Hernando De Soto, who, as we have said, was sailing in search of Florida, first sighted land in that kingdom on the last day of May. He had been nineteen days at sea because of unfavorable weather, but his ships now anchored in a good, deep bay which the Spaniards named the Bay of the Holy Spirit [Tampa Bay]. It being late afternoon when the armada arrived, no one disembarked, but on the following day, which was the first of June, some went ashore in small boats. They returned with their vessels loaded with grass for the horses and with many unripe grapes from vines found growing wild in the forests. The grape is not cultivated by the natives of this great kingdom of Florida, and they do not care as much for it as do people of other nations, but they will eat it when it is very ripe or has been dried. Our men were extremely happy over these fine specimens of the fruit, for they were similar to those grown in Spain, the like of which they had not found in Mexico or in the whole of Peru.

On the second of June, the Governor ordered three hundred foot-soldiers ashore to perform the solemn act of taking possession of Florida in the name of the Emperor Charles V, King of Spain. This procedure completed, these men passed the rest of the day walking along the coast, and that night slept on land. As yet they had seen nothing of the natives, but at the third or dawn watch, the Indians burst upon them with such audacity and force as to compel them to retreat to the edge of the water. Meanwhile, however, they sounded an alarm, and both men and horses came from the ships to aid them as quickly as if they too had been on land.

Lieutenant General Vasco Porcallo de Figueroa, who commanded the assistance, found these foot soldiers very much upset and confused, for like raw recruits, they had got in each other's way while fighting, and some already had been wounded by arrows. With the advent of help, however, all pursued the Indians for a good while and then returned to their quarters. But hardly had they arrived there when Vasco Porcallo's horse fell dead from the effects of an arrow. Striking above the saddle, the missile had passed through the cloth, saddle tree, and pack saddle; and more than a third of it had penetrated the ribs of the animal to the very cavity of its body. Vasco Porcallo, however, was exceedingly pleased that the first horse to be used in the conquest and the first lance to be employed in the first skirmish should have been his.

On this and the following day, the Spaniards disembarked both animals and men. Then when they had rested for eight or nine days and had put everything in order pertaining to their ships, they marched inland a little more than two leagues to the town of a cacique known as Hirrihigua. When Pamphilo de Narvaez had gone to conquer that province, he had waged war with Hirrihigua and later he had converted the Indian to friendship; then for some unknown reason, he had committed certain abuses against the Cacique which are of too odious a nature to be told here. It suffices to say that because of those offenses, Hirrihigua was now so fearful of the Spaniards and so

consumed with bitterness toward them that on learning of Hernando De Soto's arrival in his land he left both his house and village unprotected and fled to the forest. And although the Governor sent him gifts, endearments and promises by means of certain of his vassals whom the Spaniards had captured, still he refused to come out and make peace or even listen to any messages. Instead his anger was aroused at those of his vassals serving as envoys, and he ordered them to refrain from doing so, since they were aware of the manner in which he had been hurt and offended by the Spanish nation. He would willingly receive the heads of these Castilians, he said, but he wanted to hear nothing more of their names and words.

All such things and more abuse can bring about, particularly if it is committed against someone who has given no offense. But in order to present a better picture of the rage Hirrihigua felt for the Castilians, it will be well to show here some of the cruelties and martyrdoms he himself had inflicted upon four of Pamphilo de Narvaez men whom he succeeded in capturing. To a certain extent we may be digressing; yet we will not be leaving the main purpose of the story, and the digression will contribute much to the value of our history.

Know then that some days after Pamphilo de Narvaez had done what we have mentioned and had departed from the land of Hirrihigua, one of his ships, which had stopped elsewhere, happened to call at this same bay in search of its captain. On ascertaining the identity and purpose of the vessel, the Cacique resolved to seize every man aboard and burn him alive. Therefore, with the idea of instilling confidence in them, he pretended to be a friend of their captain, sending them word that Pamphilo de Narvaez had indeed been in that place, and moreover had left a message with him as to what their ship should do if it too should call there. Then to persuade them to belief, he disclosed from land two or three sheets of white paper and some old letters which he had obtained from Spaniards in former times by friendly means, or however it may have been, and in the interim had guarded very carefully. But in spite of all of Hirrihigua's manifestations, the men aboard ship were very cautious and refused to disembark. Then the Cacique sent out a canoe with four principal Indians, saying that he was offering these lords and cavaliers as hostages and security so that those Spaniards who wished to come ashore and learn of their captain, Pamphilo de Narvaez, might do so. (It seems inappropriate to employ the term cavalier, or caballero, in referring to Indians because they possessed no horses, or caballos, from which word the name is deduced; but since in Spain this term implies a nobleman and since there is a nobility among the Indians, it may be used like- wise in speaking of them.) And he added that if they were not reassured thereby, he would send more pledges. On witnessing the apparent good faith of the chieftain, four Spaniards set out in the canoe with those Indians who had brought the hostages. The Cacique had hoped for all of them; still when he saw that only these few were coming, he resolved not to insist on more lest the four be offended and return to their ship. As soon as the Indian hostages saw the Christians on land and in the hands of their people, they plunged into the sea, and diving far below the surface, swam like fish to the shore, thus fulfilling the instructions of their chieftain. Meanwhile, the Spaniards on board ship, finding themselves fooled," sailed out of the bay before anything worse could befall them, very much grieved, however, at having lost their four companions so indiscreetly.

Chapter Two: The Tortures which an Indian chief inflicted upon a Spaniard who was his slave.

The Cacique Hirrihigua now ordered that the four Spaniards be guarded most cautiously so that with their death his Indians might solemnize a great feast which according to the rites of paganism they expected to celebrate within a few days. Then with the arrival of that festival, he commanded that the captives be taken naked to the plaza and there made to run in turn from one side to the other while the Indians shot arrows at them as if they were wild beasts but to delay further the death and increase the agonies of their victims, and at the same time to prolong and enliven their own festivity and enjoyment, they were to discharge only a few arrows at a time. Three of the Spaniards were tortured in this manner and Hirrihigua received a great amount of pleasure and delight as he watched them flee in all directions, searching for a refuge which they found only in death. But when the Indians wanted to bring out the fourth, a native of Seville named Juan Ortiz, who was scarcely eighteen years of age, the Cacique's wife came with her three daughters and, standing before her husband, begged that he be content with the death of the three captives and pardon the fourth. Since he and his companions had not come to that land with Pamphilo de Narvaez and therefore were guiltless of the wickedness perpetrated by their predecessors. This particular boy, she said, was deserving of forgiveness because of his tender age, which gave proof of his Innocence and pled for compassion; and since he had committed no crime; it was therefore enough that he remain with them as a slave and not be destroyed so cruelly. In an effort to make his wife and daughters happy, the Cacique for the time being spared the life of Juan Ortiz; but afterward he tortured him so grievously and bitterly that the boy frequently was moved to envy his three dead companions. The ceaseless labor of carrying firewood and water was so strenuous, the eating and sleeping were so infrequent, and the daily slaps, blows, and lashes as well as other torments given him on feast days were so cruel that he many times would have sought relief in suicide had he not been a Christian. For in addition to daily tortures, Hirrihigua on numerous occasions of celebration, just as a diversion, ordered the boy to run continuously the entire day in the long plaza where his comrades had been slain. He himself went out to watch, taking his noblemen, who carried bows and arrows with which to kill the captive at any time he should pause. Thus Juan Ortiz began at sunrise and continued from one side of the plaza to the other until sunset, these being the time limits allotted by the Indians for him to run and even when Hirrihigua went away to eat, he left his cavaliers to watch the youth so that they might slay him in the event he should stop. Then when the day was over, this sad boy lay extended on the ground, more dead than alive, as one can imagine. But on such occasions as these, he received the compassion of the chieftain's wife and daughters, who took him and clothed him and did other things which helped to sustain his life, although it would have been better had they deprived him of it and thereby freed him from his many tasks. Hirrihigua now realized that such numerous and continuous torments were not sufficient to destroy Juan Ortiz, and his hatred for him increased by the hour. So to finish with the youth he gave the order on a certain feast day to kindle a great fire in the center of the plaza, and when he saw many live coals made, he commanded that they be spread out and that over them there be placed a grill like wooden structure which stood a yard above the ground, and upon which they should put his captive in order to roast him alive. Thus it was done, and here the poor Spaniard, after being tied to the grill, lay stretched out on one side for a long time. But at the shrieks of the miserable youth, the wife and daughters of the Cacique rushed up, and, pleading with their lord and even scolding him for his cruelty, removed the boy from the fire, not, however, before he was half-baked and blisters that looked like halves of oranges had formed on one of his sides. Some of these blisters burst and much blood ran from them, so that they were painful to behold. Hirrihigua overlooked what his wife and daughters were doing because they were women whom he loved deeply, and possibly also because he wanted

someone on whom he later might vent his wrath and exercise his vengeance. And although Juan Ortiz provided less occasion for vengeance than the chieftain desired still he was amused with that little. Thus he many times expressed his regret that he had destroyed the other three Spaniards so precipitately. The women, on the contrary, had time and again repented of having saved Juan Ortiz from death on the first occasion since they had seen how long and cruel his daily torments had been. But being moved to great compassion on beholding him in his present state, they took him to their lodging and treated him with the juices of herbs (for having no doctors, both Indian men and women are great herbalists). Hence after many days, Juan Ortiz recovered, although the burns from the fire left great scars. Wishing to free himself from the sight of his captive as he now was and at the same time from the bother of the pleas of his wife and daughters, the Cacique ordered to be inflicted upon the youth another torment which, though not so grave as those in the past, would keep him from idleness. This was that day and night he should guard the remains of dead citizens placed in a designated section of a forest that lay at a distance from the town. These bodies had been put above the ground in some wooden chests which served as sepulchres. The chests had no hinges and could be closed only by covering them with boards and then placing rocks or beams of wood on top of the boards. Since the Indians were not cautious about guarding their dead, the lions, which are numerous in that country sometimes robbed the chests and carried away the bodies, thus creating a situation which grieved and angered these people exceedingly. So it was that the Cacique now ordered Juan Ortiz to guard the place carefully, and he threatened and swore that should any corpse or any part of one be borne away, he would bake the Spaniard alive, this time without any remedy. Then as a means of protecting the sepulchres, he gave the youth four darts to throw at the lions or any other wild beasts that might come to desecrate the place. Thanking God for having delivered him from the continuous presence of his master, Juan Ortiz now went to guard the dead, hoping to find with them a better life than he had found with the living. And he did watch these bodies with the utmost care, especially at night, since it was then that the risk was greater. But it happened that on one of these nights when he was thus occupied, he found himself unable to resist sleep and consequently succumbed in the dawn watch, this being the hour at which sleep ordinarily shows its greatest force against those who keep vigil. At this time a lion came to the place of the dead, and knocking down the covers of one of the chests, seized and bore away the body of a child which had been laid there only two days previously.

Juan Ortiz was awakened by the noise of the falling boards, and when on rushing to the chest he failed to find the body, he considered himself as good as dead. Nevertheless in his anxiety and anguish he did not waver in his duty and determined instead to go in search of the lion; for he vowed that on running across it, he would recover the remains of the child or die at the hands of the beast. At the same time, however, he commended himself to God, invoking His name and making his confessions, for he was confident that when the Indians came at dawn to visit the sepulchres and failed to find the body of the child, they would burn him alive. As he moved here and there through the forest, haunted by the fear of death, he came out upon a broad road and proceeded for a little while down the middle of it, for impossible as escape was, he had made up his mind to flee. Then in the woods not far from where he was walking, he heard a sound much like that of a dog gnawing bones. Listening carefully, he made certain of the sound and suspecting that it might be the lion devouring the stolen corpse, groped his way through the underbrush toward the spot from whence it was coming. Presently in the light of the moon, which was shining, although dimly, he saw the beast nearby, feeding at its pleasure upon the remains of the child. Calling upon God and mustering courage, Juan Ortiz hurled a dart. At the moment he did not see

what kind of throw he had made because of the underbrush; still, he felt that his marksmanship had not been bad because his hand was salty, and there was a saying among hunters that one's hands were thus when he had made a successful shot at wild beasts in the night. Encouraged now by this hope, slight as it was, and by the fact that he had not heard the lion flee from the spot to which he had directed his dart Juan Ortiz, now awaited the coming of dawn, trusting in Our Lord to succor him in his necessity.

Chapter Three: A continuation of the miserable life of the capture, How he fled from his master

With the light of day, Juan Ortiz verified the good throw made blindly in the night, for he discovered the lion lying dead, pierced through the center of its heart and entrails (as was afterward seen when its carcass was opened). The sight was more than he could believe so with a joy that can be imagined more easily than described, he gathered up the uneaten remnants of the child's body and returned them to the chest. Then seizing the dead beast by one foot, he dragged it to his master without removing the dart so that the Cacique could see the animal just as he himself had found it. Hirrihigua and his whole village were greatly amazed at what Juan Ortiz had accomplished, for in that land it is generally considered miraculous to kill a lion, and he who happens to do so is treated thereafter with great veneration and respect. Since this creature is so savage, people everywhere should be held in high esteem for destroying it, especially if, as in the case of Juan Ortiz, they do so without benefit of arquebus or crossbow. It is true that the lions of Florida, Mexico and Peru are not so large or so wild as those of Africa, but after all they are lions and the name is enough. Even though there is a common saying to the effect that these animals are not so fierce as they are painted, nevertheless those who have found themselves in the proximity of them insist that live lions are much fiercer than painted ones, no matter how lifelike the painting may be. With the good fortune of Juan Ortiz, the Cacique's wife and daughters became even more daring and courageous in their efforts to persuade their lord to exonerate the youth completely and give him tasks that would be both honorable and worthy of his strength and valor. And thenceforward for a few days, Hirrihigua did treat his slave better, being motivated as much by the admiration and esteem the people of his house and town had bestowed upon him as by the fact that he had performed a deed which was not only valiant but one that the Indians in their superstition had come to venerate as something sacred and even superhuman. Nevertheless outrage knows no forgiveness, and each time that Hirrihigua recalled that Spaniards had cast his mother to the dogs and permitted them to feed upon her body, and each time that he attempted to blow his nose and failed to find it, the Devil seized him with the thought of avenging himself on Juan Ortiz, as if that young man personally had deprived him of his nostrils. The very sight of this Spaniard always brought past offenses before his eyes, and such memories increased each day his anger and lust for retribution.

So although Hirrihigua for some time restrained these passions, he now was unable to resist them. Thus one day he informed his wife and daughters that he could no longer suffer the Christian to live. For, he said, he found the life of this man very odious and abominable and could not view him without experiencing a revival of past grievances and without feeling offended anew; and it was therefore his command that unless they were willing to share the same anger, they should in no manner intercede further for the Christian. Then he added that in order to end completely with his slave he had made up his mind that on such and such a feast day soon to be celebrated, the

Indians should shoot the Spaniard with arrows and slay him just as they had slain his companions. This, he said, was to be done in spite of Juan Ortiz' bravery, for such bravery being that of an enemy should be abhorred rather than esteemed.

Perceiving the anger of the Cacique, the women realized that further intercession was useless, and moreover that it had been rude for them to importune and pain their lord so extensively in behalf of his slave. So they ventured no word in contradiction, instead hastening with female astuteness to agree that he should by all means proceed with his plan since such was his pleasure. But a few days before the approaching celebration, the eldest daughter, in order to carry out an idea of her own, secretly notified Juan Ortiz of her father's decision against him, warning at the same time that neither she nor her mother and sisters would or could prevail upon Hirrihigua since he had imposed silence upon them in regard to his prisoner and had threatened them should they violate his restriction. To this sad news, however, the maiden in her desire to encourage the Spaniard added some words of quite another character. "Lest you lose faith in me and despair of your life or doubt that I will do everything in my power to save you," she said, "I will assist you to escape and find refuge if you are a man and have the courage to flee. For tonight, if you will come at a certain hour to a certain place, you will find an Indian in whom I shall entrust both your welfare and mine. This man will guide you to a bridge two leagues distant; but when you arrive there, you must command him to go no further and instead to return before dawn to this village lest he be missed and by revealing my rashness as well as his own cause both of us to suffer for having given you aid. Six leagues beyond the bridge there is another town, the lord of which is Mucozo, a man who loves me exceedingly and desires my hand in marriage. You will tell him that I am sending you in my name so that he may help you in your need. I know that, being the person he is, he will do everything he can for you, as you shall see. And now commend yourself to your God, for there is no more that I can do in your behalf."

Juan Ortiz threw himself at the feet of the maiden in gratitude for this favor and benefit as well as for all of her kindnesses both past and present. Then he made preparations to flee during the coming night. At the appointed hour, when everyone in the Cacique's household was asleep, he sought out the promised guide and they departed from the town without being heard. When they reached the bridge and the youth learned that there was no further possibility of his losing his way before coming to the town of Mucozo, he instructed his companion to return at once with the utmost caution to his home.

Chapter Four: The magnanimity of the Curaca or Cacique Mucozo to whom the captive was entrusted.

Fugitive now, Juan Ortiz arrived before dawn at the place he was seeking, but he dared not enter lest he create a disturbance. Then when it was day he saw two Indians coming out of the town by the same path he himself was pursuing. These men wanted to shoot at him, for the people of Florida are always armed; but Juan Ortiz, being armed also, put an arrow to his bow to defend himself and even to take the offense. Oh, how much a small favor can do, especially if it be the favor of a lady; for we now see that he who only a short time previously feared death and knew not where to hide, now dared mete it out with his own hands simply because he had seen himself assisted by a beautiful, discreet, and generous young maiden, But such a favor does exceed all other human kindness.

Mustering his courage and strength and even his arrogance Juan Ortiz disclosed that he was no enemy but merely a messenger sent by a lady to the lord of that land. On hearing him, the Indians withheld their arrows and then conducted him to the town where they informed their Cacique that Hirrihigua's slave had come with a message for him.

This news having been made known to Mucozo (or Mocozo, for it is the same name), he came to the plaza to receive the Christian's words. Then Juan Ortiz, after having saluted the chieftain as best he knew how according to native customs, gave a brief account of the martyrdoms he had suffered at the hands of his master in testimony of which he revealed the scars from the burns, blows, and other injuries he had received. He told how Hirrihigua at last had determined to kill him for the purpose of enlivening a certain feast day that was approaching, and how that Cacique's wife and daughters, who had saved him so many times previously, dared not speak now in his behalf since they had been forbidden to do so under penalty of their lord's wrath. "But the eldest daughter," he continued, "not wanting to see me perish, commanded and gave me courage as a last resort to flee. She provided a guide to direct me to your town and your lodging, and told me to present myself before you in her name, saying that she begs Your Lordship, for the love that you bear her, to receive me under your protection and, being the person you are, to favor me as something she herself has entrusted to you."

Mucozo received the Christian affably and listened with compassion to his account of the sufferings and torments he had experienced, evidences of which were clearly revealed by the scars on his body, for he was dressed as the Indians of that land in no more than some loin cloths. At this point in the story Alonso de Carmona adds that the Cacique embraced Juan Ortiz and kissed him on the face as a sign of peace. Moreover, he assured him of his welcome and urged him to make an effort to forget the fear of his former existence; for, he said, in his house and company he would find life very different from what he had known previously. "In order to serve the one who sent you as well as yourself who have come to me and my house for protection," he continued, "I will do all that I can, as you shall see by my actions; and you may be certain that so long as I shall live, no one will take the occasion to molest you."

All the promises this good Cacique made in favor of Juan Ortiz, he fulfilled; and he did much more, for immediately he appointed him his chamberlain and carried him in his company day and night. He bestowed many honors upon him and increased these honors exceedingly when he learned that Juan Ortiz had killed a lion with a single dart. In sum he treated him as his own brother, but as a very much beloved brother (for there are some brothers who love each other like fire and water).

Hirrihigua suspected that his slave had fled to his neighbor for protection, and he many times asked for his return; but on each occasion Mucozo excused himself, finally telling the Cacique among other things that the loss of a slave so odious to him was a small loss indeed and that he should cease molesting that slave now that he had sought protection in his neighbor's house. Then Hirrihigua asked the assistance of Uribarracuxi, a brother-in-law of Mucozo, but when that chieftain sent messages concerning the release of the captive, Mucozo gave the same reply. Furthermore, he did not vary in his decision when Uribarracuxi, after finding his messages futile, came to him in person. On the contrary, he angrily informed his brother-in-law that it was unjust for a kinsman to demand that he do a thing so unbecoming to his honor and reputation. And he added that if performing his duty meant delivering up an afflicted person who had been entrusted to his

care just so that person's enemy might torture and kill him like a wild beast solely for entertainment and pleasure, then he would continue remiss in his obligation. Indeed this Cacique defended Juan Ortiz with such generosity against the two chieftains who sought him so persistently and obstinately that rather than return the slave to be slaughtered by his former master, he chose to abandon all possibility of a marriage with Hirrihigua's daughter, whom he ardently desired and subsequently lost, and at the same time to forfeit his friendship and kinship with Urribarracuxi. Moreover, he continued to hold the Christian in high esteem and to regale him until the coming of Governor Hernando de Soto to Florida.

Juan Ortiz was ten years among those Indians. For a year and a half he was in the power of Hirrihigua; but the remainder of the time he spent with the good Mucozo, who although a barbarian, behaved toward this Christian in a manner far different from that of the famous Triumvirate of Laino (a place near Bologna), which made a never-sufficiently abominated proscription and agreement to exchange relatives, friends and protectors for enemies and adversaries. And too, his behavior was much more admirable than that of other Christian princes who since then have made bargains equally odious, if not more so, when one considers the innocence of those delivered up, the rank of some of them, and the fidelity which their deliverers should have had and respected. For the betrayed were infidels, whereas their betrayers took pride in the name and doctrines of Christianity. Violating the laws and statutes of pagan realms, disrespecting the very existence and rank of kings and great princes, and valuing even less their sworn and promised fidelity (a thing unworthy of such a name), these Christians, solely to avenge their anger, exchanged people who had not offended them for those who had, thus giving up the innocent for the guilty.

To this fact both ancient and modern histories testify, but we shall abandon this subject lest we offend powerful ears and grieve the pious. It suffices to represent the magnanimity of an infidel so that if possible surpass him not in infidelity as some do who are undeserving of the title of Christian, but in virtue and similar excellences; for being of a more lofty estate, they are under greater obligations. In fact, when one has considered well the circumstances of this Indian's valiant deed, the people for whom and against whom it was performed, and the great amount he was willing to forego and forfeit, even proceeding contrary to his own love and desire by denying the aid and the factor asked of and promised by him, it will be seen that he was born with a most generous and heroic spirit and did not deserve to have come into the world and lived in the barbarous paganism of Florida. But God and human nature many times produce such souls in sterile and uncultivated deserts to the greater confusion and shame of people who are born and reared in lands that are fertile and abundant in all good doctrines and sciences, as well as the Christian religion.

Chapter Five: The Governor sends for Juan Ortiz.

On arriving at the Cacique Hirrihigua's village (where we now find him), the Governor had received a garbled version of the life of Juan Ortiz; moreover, while still in Havana, he had heard a less extensive report from one of the four Indians seized by the Comptroller Juan de Anasco at the time he was sent to explore the coast of Florida. Now when this Indian, who happened to be a vassal of Hirrihigua, was speaking of Juan Ortiz, he said only Ortiz, omitting the Juan since he knew nothing of this part of the name. But the pronunciation of the name was defective and the understanding of

the good interpreters who were declaring what he desired to say was even worse. Therefore when those listening, whose principal aim was to go in search of gold, heard him say Ortiz, they asked for no further interpretation but understood him to declare flatly that in his land there was much oro or gold. Thus they were cheered and made merry just with hearing the word named, although with such different meaning and sense.

Having made certain that Juan Ortiz was indeed in the power of Mucozo, the Governor concluded that it would be wise to send for him; first, to remove him from the hands of the Indians, and then to provide the army with a much needed interpreter whom he could trust. For the purpose, he selected Baltasar de Gallegos, a native of Seville, who served as high constable of both the fleet and the army, but who because of his great virtue, strength and courage really deserved to command an even greater force than the present one. "Go now to Mucozo with a squadron of sixty lancers," he said to this cavalier, "and tell him how grateful I and my whole company of Spaniards are for the honors and benefits he has conferred upon Juan Ortiz, and how much I desire to be offered an occasion to requite them. Moreover say that since I have need of the Christian for some things of great import, I beseech that he be returned to me and that when the Cacique should find it convenient to come and visit me, I should be most pleased to know him and would regard him as a friend." With his sixty lancers and an Indian guide, Baltasar de Gallegos thereupon left the camp to execute the Governor's command.

The Cacique Mucozo, for his part, having learned that Governor Hernando de Soto had arrived with a great force of men and horses to seize land near that of his own and fearing now that these Spaniards would do him harm, resolved, with prudence and good advice, to forestall the evil that might be visited upon him. So summoning Juan Ortiz, he addressed him as follows: "You should know, my brother, that in the town of your good friend Hirrihigua there is a Spanish captain who comes with a thousand warriors and many horses to seize this land. You are indeed aware of what I have done for you, how in order to save you from that person who held you in slavery and wanted to deprive you of life, I chose to incur the enmity of my relatives and neighbors rather than comply with what they asked me to do to your harm. A time and occasion has now arisen wherein you can repay me for my hospitality, largess and friendship; and although I have never once done anything for you with expectancy of reward, Fortune makes it prudent that I at this time take advantage of the opportunity offered me in your person. Go therefore to the Spanish general and request in my name as well as your own, that as a recompense for the favor I have rendered him and all of his nation through my kindness to you (since I would do the same for each of them), he not deem it expedient to do me harm in this little land of mine, and that he deign to receive me into his fellowship and service. Say also that I henceforward offer him my person, house and state so that he may place my land under his protection and favor. And that you may be accompanied in a style befitting both your station and mine, take with you fifty gentlemen of my household and look out for them and for me as our friendship obligates you to do."

Rejoicing over this fortunate news and inwardly thanking God for it, Juan Ortiz expressed great pleasure that a time and occasion should have arisen wherein he might render service for the mercy and benefits bestowed upon him-not only for life itself but in addition for the extensive favor, esteem and honor he had received as a result of Mucozo's great virtue and courtesy. Then he promised to give a liberal account of all such things to the Spanish Captain and his men that they too might in turn express their gratitude and make recompense with what he at present was going

to ask of them in the Cacique's behalf and also with whatever might arise in the future. He was quite confident, he said, that that Captain would comply with his request since the Spanish nation prided itself on being a people who felt gratitude for anything that might be done in the service of their countrymen. Surely, therefore, the Cacique might hope to succeed in the petition he was sending. With that, the fifty Indians came whom Mucozo had ordered to be made ready, and together with Juan Ortiz set out on the highway joining the two towns. They departed on the same day that Baltasar de Gallegos left the camp to go in search of the captive. Now it happened that when the Spaniards had traveled more than three leagues along this broad, straight road leading to the town of Mucozo, their Indian guide decided that it was not very clever for him to exercise so much fidelity with men who had come to deprive his people of their lands and liberty, and who from far back had shown themselves to be declared enemies, although the present army up until this point had caused them no grievances of which they could complain. So he changed his mind about directing these men, and the first path which he saw crossing and leaving the highway he took; then after pursuing this path for a short distance, he lost it, for it was not continuous. Thus for a great part of the day, he misled these Spaniards, directing them always in an arc toward the sea, for it was his purpose to come by chance upon some marsh, creek or bay where, if possible, he would drown them. Being unacquainted with the land, the Castilians were not aware of the deception until one of their number on arriving at a clear wood glanced through the trees and by chance saw the main topsails of the ships they had left behind in the bay. Realizing now that they were near the coast, this man hastened to inform the Captain of his discovery.

The perfidy of his guide having been disclosed, Baltasar de Gallegos threatened him with death and made a gesture as if to run him through with a lance. Fearing that the Spaniards might indeed kill him, the Indian, with whatever signs and words he could muster, indicated his willingness to take them once more to the main road, explaining, however, that it was necessary to go back over all of the places they had passed since leaving it. And this they did, returning through the same passages in search of the highway.

Chapter Six: What happened between Juan Ortiz and the Spaniards who were seeking him.

Following the highway, Juan Ortiz came to the path where Baltasar de Gallegos and his cavaliers had been led astray. Then being suspicious of what had come to pass and fearful lest the Castilians had taken some other route and thus eventually would harm Mucozo's town, he consulted his companions as to what should be done. All agreed that they must hasten as quickly as possible along the tracks left by the horses, and that lest they wander aimlessly they should never deviate from these tracks until such time as they had overtaken the Spaniards.

Now since the Indians were following the Spaniards and since the latter were returning over the same route they had taken, each caught sight of the other upon a great plain which was fringed along one side by a dense forest. On beholding the Castilians, the Indians told Juan Ortiz that it would be wise for them to secure their lives and persons by taking refuge among the trees until such time as the Christians should recognize them as friends, for since these people regarded them as enemies, they might lance them in the open field. But Juan Ortiz refused to heed their good counsel, being confident that since he was a Spaniard, his countrymen would recognize him the moment they beheld him — as if he had been attired in Spanish clothes or something else that might differentiate him, instead of being equipped as he was like the natives with nothing but

some loin cloths on his body, a bow and arrows in his hand, and for ornament, plumage half a fathom in height upon his head.

Inexperienced and anxious to fight, the Castilians, on catching sight of the Indians, assailed them in full force despite the shouts of their captain who sought vainly to hold them in check. But who can do anything with raw recruits when they are disordered? Meanwhile the natives on perceiving with what boldness and deliberateness the Spaniards came after them, plunged into the forest, none of their group remaining except Juan Ortiz and a lone Indian who had been a little less hasty than his comrades about seeking shelter. This particular Indian was overtaken in the bushes skirting the edge of the forest and wounded with a lance blow in the loin by Francisco de Morales, a native of Seville who had seen service in Italy. Juan Ortiz, on the other hand, was attacked by Alvaro Nieto, a native of Albuquerque, who was one of the strongest and most robust men in the entire Spanish army. Closing with the captive, this Spaniard thrust vigorously at him with his lance, but Juan Ortiz possessed good fortune as well as skill; for beating down the weapon with his bow and at the same time leaping aside, he was able to avoid both the lance and an encounter with the horse of his assailant. Then perceiving Alvaro Nieto turning again upon him, he cried in a loud voice, "Xivilla, Xivilla," by which he intended to say, "Sevilla, Sevilla." In describing the incident, Juan Coles adds that failing in his efforts to speak Castilian, Juan Ortiz made a sign of the cross with his hand and his bow so that his opponent might recognize him as a Christian.

Since there had been little or no opportunity for Juan Ortiz to speak Castilian among the Indians, he had forgotten even so much as how to pronounce the name of his native land. But I shall be able to say the same of myself, for having found no person in Spain with whom I may speak my mother tongue, which is the one generally used in Peru (although the Incas have a special language that they employ in speaking among themselves), I have so forgotten it that I cannot construe a sentence of as many as six or seven words which will convey my meaning, and I cannot remember many of the Indian terms necessary to name such and such an object. This language having been the idiom of the court, and the Incas having been the chief courtiers, they speak it most excellently and better than all others; and I, as the son of an Inca princess and the nephew of Inca princes, know how to speak it as well if not better and more eloquently than those Indians who are not Incas. But even though it is true that I would understand all that were said should I hear an Inca speak, since I would remember the meaning of forgotten words, still, try as I may, I cannot tell of my own accord what certain words are. Thus I have found through experience that one learns the words of a strange language by using them, but that he likewise forgets those of his own language by failing to use them.

But let us return to Juan Ortiz, whom we left in great danger of being destroyed by those who of all others desired to see him alive. When Alvaro Nieto heard the captive shout "Xivilla," he inquired if he were Juan Ortiz, and on the latter's answering in the affirmative, he seized him with one arm and threw him across the haunches of his horse as if he had been a child, for this good soldier was robust and strong. Overjoyed at having found the man he was seeking, he thanked God that he had not killed him, for he still had visions of having done so then he carried him to Captain Baltasar de Gallegos, who received him with much happiness. In their eagerness to destroy Indians, the other cavaliers were combing the woods for them as if they were deer, so that later all might meet and enjoy the good luck that had befallen them. But lest they unwittingly injure people who were their friends, the Captain ordered them to be recalled. Then Juan Ortiz entered the

forest and shouted loudly for the Indians to come out and not be afraid. Many, however, kept on running until they had reached their town and informed Mucozo of what had occurred, but others who had not gone far did return in groups of three and four just as they happened to find themselves.

Each and every one of the Indians individually and angrily scolded Juan Ortiz for his rashness, and when they realized that their companion had been wounded because of the Christian, they were so angered that they could scarcely refrain from laying hands on him and would have done so but for the fact that the Spaniards were present. They did avenge their anger, however, with a thousand affronts, saying that he was a foolish, silly and nonsensical man who was neither Spaniard nor warrior, and that he had benefited little or nothing from his past afflictions, which had not been imposed upon him in vain since he had really deserved much worse. In sum, no Indian came from the forest without scolding him in almost identical words, all of which he, to his greater shame, interpreted for the rest of the Spaniards. Thus Juan Ortiz was thoroughly rebuked for having been so trustful, but in exchange he was completely compensated by the sight of himself once again among Christians. They in turn treated the wounded Indian and putting him on a horse, set out with Juan Ortiz and all of his companions for the camp, for they were anxious to bring the Governor such a prompt and satisfactory response to his orders. Before they departed, however, Juan Ortiz dispatched a messenger to Mucozo with an account of all that had actually occurred so that the Cacique would not be upset by what he might have learned from those of his people who had fled.

Both Alonso de Carmona and Juan Coles relate all of the facts we have reported concerning Juan Ortiz, but the former adds that worms fell into the sores acquired while the Christian was being roasted, and the latter says that the Governor immediately gave the man a suit of black velvet, but that since he had gone naked for so long a time, he could not bear to wear it and in consequence wore only a shirt, some linen pants, a cap and some shoes for twenty days while gradually accustoming himself to being dressed. Likewise, both of these eyewitnesses declare that in addition to other favors conferred upon the Christian, Mucozo made him his Captain General on both land and sea.