A DAUGHTER OF THE SIERRA

BY CHRISTIAN REID

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CHAPTER IX

IN THE PATIO OF THE CARIDAD

The village of Topia lies far and high in the Sierra, occupying a position so impregnable and almost inac essible that it is easy to believe the tradition that it was ouce a stronghold of robbers, before its mines were discovered and the present stern rule of law and order began in Mexico. town nestles is surrounded on three sides by immense, cliff-crested, almost precipitous heights, which tower above and curve around it like the walls of a mighty amphitheatre. On the single side where these walls open, the mountain shelf drops sharply and sheerly to the quebrada a thousand feet below, down which pours its tamultuous river, and up which in the season of the rains come vast masses of clouds from the that envelop Topia in their white folds, as they strike the sides of the great mountains which enclose it A wilder spot, one with a note of more absolutely savage grandeur, does not exist on the face of the And yet it has a note of beauly, too, which stirs the imagin ation and sinks into the heart with a charm so irresistible that he who has once felt the spell of its majestic forms, and feasted his eyes on the aerial loveliness of its tints, can never quite be satisfied in other and

So Isabel Rivers was thinking, as she sat on a heap of ore in the patio of the Caridad mine and looked at the picture before her. It was a very comprehensive view which her posigave ; for the Caridad mine lies in the heights which close the north ern end of the valley. And as she sat in front of the rough arch of the horizontal tunnel which leads into the workings of the mine, the whole valley was spread with panoramic distinctness at her feet, its stupendous mountain wall sweeping around in splendid curve on each side. Passing over the town of singlestoried houses, where the graceful belfry of the church formed the only salient feature, her gaze dwelt on the one bit of distance in the scene-a vision of farther heights robed in azure, which were to be seen through the gateway where the encircling ramparts opened to form the walls of the quebrada lying so dark and deep It was a glimpse of celestial softness and beauty, in striking contrast to the stern grandeur of the adous cliffs, rent and torn and standing as it were on end, which formed the immediate foreground of the picture. unconsciously she murmured aloud

The sounding cataract Haunted me like a passion; the tall

The mountain, and the deep and Thornton remarked. gloomy wood, Their colors and their forms were

then to me An appetite, a feeling and a love had no need of a remoter

charm.

Some one laughed, and she looked thoroughly mastered." around quickly. The Mexicans at work in the patio—men bringing out brains as of training," said Lloyd. ground breaking and sorting it—
were all before her, and it was certain that none of them had laughed;
so, turning, she glanced upward. A
steep path came down the mountain
above the tunnel, from some upper
above the tunnel, from some upper
above the mine; and along this

"Yes, Miss Rivers is most importate;" Therefore I bid you come."

"I will. I am now more than ever
determined to do so. Have I told
you, by the by, that Dona Victoria,
before we parted, asked me to visit
before we parted and that none of them had laughed;
"I will. I am now more than ever
determined to do so. Have I told
if I do—may I call on you?"

"I will on mow more than ever
and it was certhe stan of the s

"I heard you spouting Wordsworth," he said, "and I couldn't but laugh to think how much one stands in need of a remoter charm-in Topia."

Speak for yourself," she returned, "I don't think Topia stands the least in need of a remoter charm. And I wasn't 'spouting;' I was simply thinking aloud, not knowing of any irrevverent listener nearby."
"I'm not irreverent," he protested.

" My attitude toward both yourself and Wordsworth is reverence itself. But, honestly now, you must admit that, however picturesque it may be, there are a few things lacking here, even though we do sit

—on the hills, like gods together, Careless of mankind."

"It seems that spouting Tenny son is allowable, though spouting Wordsworth is not," she said, with gentle sarcasm. 'And it certainly isn't at all true to say that you are 'careless of mankind.' I never saw And it certainly any one more visibly pining for an at-mosphere of 5 o'clock teas and golf and theatres, and - and all such things.' He threw up his hands and eyes

together. I call the gods-not ourselves, but the real gods—to witness that I am incapable of pining for a 5 o'clock tea, although I say nothing about golf and theatres, I frankly confess that I have a social as well as an artistic side to my character; where

Well?"—as he paused. "Is it the social or the artistic side that my character lacks?"

the social or the artistic side that while here is papa at last." my character lacks ?"

character lacks nothing,

present in abeyance, while you are all alive on your artistic side—fascin-ated by the novelty of the scenes and

life around you." What would I be made of if I were not fascinated by such scenes? I don't envy the person who could look unmoved on that "—she indi-cated the wide and wonderful picture before them,—" or who would not be interested in the people living under those roofs down there."

He looked doubtful.
'I grant that one might search the world around and find nothing grander in the way of scenery, if grandeur consists in precipitousness. he said. "But for the people—don't you think that human nature is pretty much the same under what-

'Oh, human nature!" she an swered impatiently. "Of course that is the same: in other words, these people love and hate and hope and fear and suffer just as we do. Those things are elemental. But what differentiates human nature are customs, manners, habits, and the mode of expressing elemental feeling. That is what I find interesting under those roofs."

"It's evident that you must find something, else you could't give so many hours as you do to these Mexiinteresting.'

don't know enough Spanish to talk

to them.' The trouble in our conversations is not want of language, but want of topics. We have, as sentimental self defense most men under such circumstances are driven to making love, but that I never do."

tain girt valley a charm of remote ness and repose seemed breathe like a spell. Never ?"

"If you are trying to entrap me into a stale quotation. I decline to be entrapped. If you mean to cast doubt on my assertion — why, by Jove !- Lloyd !"

The tall, sunburnt man who had entered the patio with the careless air of one who finds himself in a spot with which he is thoroughly familiar looked quickly around at sound of

Ah, Thornton !" he said, putting out his hand. And then, uncovering at the sight of the figure rising from the ore heap: Miss Rivers this is an unexpected pleasure."

"Not an unexpected pleasure to

find me in Topia, I hope," she said, smiling; "else you must have forgotten our journey up the que-

'In Topia, not at all," he replied ; "but in the patio of the Caridad."

"Oh, Miss Rivers is immensely interested in mining!" Thornton informed him. "If she continues on informed him. "If she continues on the course she has set out upon, she

will soon be qualified to take charge of the Caridad." "Which simply means," explained the young lady, "that I walk up to the mine every afternoon for the sunset, that I have once or twice been taken into the tunnel, luxuriously seated in an ore car, and that I been trying to learn to distin-

guish the different grades of ore.' "It's perfectly wonderful how much she has learned about ores,"

"I should be very much ashamed," said Miss Rivers, "if I had not brains boys engaged with rapid dexterity in breaking and sorting the ores—"have Sne looked at him, her eyes shin-

ore, boys seated in groups on the "But I see that I must congratulate ground breaking and sorting it— the staff of the Cardad on at least you love it!"

run by the opening brought him to her side. Then he laughed again. It was Thornton.

also, if I may judge by the stories told of the era before my reign," said Isabel. "You are all like certain savage tribes of which one has heard-you submit and profess to appreciate the rule of law and order, but in your hearts you remember and regret the days of freedom, law-lessness and disorder."

The Gerente must answer for himself," Thornton said. "It's pos-sible that he may be pining for a return of the arbitrary rule of 'Dona Guadalupe, as the mozos with bated breath called the cook; but for the rest of us, I don't think we are un grateful for the blessings of Provid-What those blessings are Lloyd, you can't figure to yourself till you enter the Company house,"

"I can figure a little," said Lloyd.
"I observed clean windows and lace curtains as I walked up the road

a few minutes ago."
"Clean windows!" said Miss
Rivers. "You mean that you ob-Rivers. served, with astonishment, windows at all. There were not any when l came, only great doors, which of course, if one wanted any light, had to be open in all weather.'

I'm sure you remember how we used to enjoy dining in overcoats buttoned up to our chins, with a fog as thick as Dona Guadalupe's soup pouring in through the open doors, Thornton reminded him. "We have changed all that. Dinner has become a social function, with flowers.

evening clothes --Don't believe such nonsense, Mr. Lloyd," said Isabel. "I hope you will come and see for yourself just And mean

Mr. Rivers emerged as she spoke absolutely nothing, which goes to make perfection. I was only about to remark that your social side is at the mine. The Gerente at once ob-

served his former subordinate "Hello, Lloyd!" he exclaimed, with the extremely tempered cordiality of the Anglo Saxon. "Where do

you come from?"
"From the Sierra," Lloyd answered comprehensively, as they shook

From the Sierra, eh? And what have you done with Armistead?"
"He is at the meson in Topia.
We reached there an hour or two repair the ravages of several days' hard riding and forest camping, while 'a spirit in my feet' led me up the old path to the Caridad."

"Well, you'll find the mine in pretty good shape. In the San Juan shaft—you remembr it?— we've struck splendid ore. You must go in shaftand look at the vein to-morrow Meanwhile we are just going home.

You'd better come with us." Lloyd being of the same opinion, the group left the patic and strolled over a road which ran along the side of the mountain, with two or three shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western this life should be enjoying the revealed with the shadow of the western the wes shadow of the western hills had fallen over the valley, but sunlight can women, who are to me most uninteresting."

"That is probably because you The exquisite freshness which always comes with the close of the day in Mexico, and especially so in these wonderful Alpine regions, filled the air : forest fragrances were borne from the deep defiles of the hills; and all over the high, mounness and repose seemed breathed

"And so you are just from the Sierra!" Miss Rivers said presently to Lloyd, when her father and Thornton paused to speak to some miners belonging to the night shift whom they met going up to the mine. am disposed to envy you. I have think. There's nothing else for her such a longing to climb that mount odo." tain wall"-she looked up at the great, sunshine-touched escarpu "and see the wonders that lie be-

"They are really wonders of beauty and grandeur," he assured her; "but the country is so wild and untrodden that only a genuine lover of Nature should venture into it. Any superficial enthusiasm wor soon wear off under the discomforts and perils which abound."
"I hope I am a genuine lover of

Nature. I have never found my en. ly for a moment. Then she said thusiasm wear off under discomforts and perils. On the contrary, the do. farther I have gone into any wilderness the happier I have been. I "It is ve

of the sierra."
'Then climb the mountain wall; the Sierra will welcome you. It will give you glades to sleep in that you will feel it a sacrilege to enter; and, having entered, a hard necessity to leave. It will shade your way with the noblest forests you have ever seen: it will lead you through cannons where no ray of sunlight has | so ? ever pierced; it will show you views he is going to do and let her know." so wide that you will wish for the wings of a dove to fly out over ly. But I don't clearly see how we them; and it will give you pictures can never forget them; and, thinkenough to acquire the rudiments of a knowledge which these "—she with longing to return to the wild, "Y waved her hand toward the group of green solitudes, so high, so remote, Miss

ing with a light which had not been n them before. "I knew you could talk of the Sierra if you would," she said. "How

I am sure that you are the first grin-ga whom Dona Victoria has ever asked to cross her threshold. And it is a threshold worth crossing She has built herself a veritable castle-for the Sierra.'

You have seen it ?" 'I was there a few weeks ago." "How interesting! Why did you go? But perhaps I should not ask." There is no reason why I should not tell you that I went with Mr. Armistead on business." He hesi-

was not a business of which approve, and therefore my part in it was simply that of an interpreter. Miss Rivers was silent for a mom ent, and glanced over her shoulder to see how far the others were be-

tated a moment, than addes :

hind, before she said : "You can't imagine how surprised I was when papa told me, after we reached home, who Don's Victoria is—the dauguter of Mr. Trafford of san Francisco.

"It must have surprised you." "It did more than surprise, it shocked me deeply. Of course, having been brought up in Californa, I have grown accustomed to meeting divorced people, and to seeing all the dreadful consequences of divorce -broken families, new households, children whose parents have each made other 'marriages.' Oh, it is appealed to him. horrible! And, quite apart from any question of religious morality, feeling must shrink from it with disgust. But what I was about to say is that, accustomed as I am to divorces, they have always been between people who were both. ous to have the tie broken; but papa says that he has heard that this poor woman-what is her name?"

property but continues to hold it."

"Agein perfectly true. And not content with what he already holds."

"Taey are mine, too," smiled Jennie as she started to accompany "He is at the meson in Topla. he is trying to obtain more. It is the children to the gate. "And what more; and I left him endeavoring to lic knowledge that he is claiming the "Oh, bread and butter—and Santa Cruz Mine."
"The Santa Cruz! O Mr. Lloyd!

Why, I have heard papa say that it is the richest mine in the Sierra."

"If you know Mr. Trafford, it is "John!" exclaimed Margaret,

hardly necessary for me to point out abashed, that that is reason enough for his "John claiming it. But he is so wealthy—millions upon millions, people say that he

'The appetite for millions grow with their possesion, you know. Probably Trafford's wealth is exag-gerated. Certainly he has use for it

to express Miss Rivers' sentiments.
She cleached her hands into two
small white fists. "When I think
that I have been in that man's house, that I have walked over his carnets and sat on his chairs and accept his bospitality, I hate myself," s declared presently,—" or at least I feel as if I stood in need of some kind of purification. And will he succeed?—will be get the mine?" Not if Dona Victoria can hold it,

you may be sure.' Dona Victoria! Yes, I am sure she will fight for her own and her mother's rights. What is she

going to do ?' Sit tight, as our British friends would say, on the Santa Cruz, I my pigeons away from me and blood-

And what is he going to do-Mr. Trafford, I mean ?" " I must refer you to Mr. Armistead for that information. I told him

when we left the Calderon hacienda that I would help him no further, either directly or indirectly, in the matter; and so I am not in his confidence. You are still with him ?"

"In other business. We are taking hold of some mines together.' Miss Rivers walked on meditative I must know what he is going to

'It is very good of you," said ness the happier I have been. I don's think I should prove unworthy of the sierra." Lloyd with a smile: "but I don't really think that Dona Victoria needs to be put on her guard. She is a

It will wide awake young woman. 'But they say in California that no man-no trained business manis wide enough awake to be able to over tomorrow and help me make 'get ahead of Trafford.' I've heard apple butter?'' she asked. Maybe that over and over again. How, then, can a Mexican girl hope to do We must find out what

are going to find out without asking to carry away so beautiful that you Armistead; and of course in that case one couldn't violate confid

You are a man. Mr. Lloyd." said Miss Rivers, pityingly; "and I suppose it is only natural that a man should not know how to make another man talk without directly asking anything, or being bound to consider anything confidential. I will find out from Mr. Armistead what he has been ordered to do : and

promptness; although he could not but smile to think how he had already pledged his service to Victoria in almost the same words.

TO BE CONTINUED

A CHILLY INTERVAL AT THE CORNERS

Helen Moriarity in Rosary Magazin

There was a k nock at the side door. Jennie, who had been dozing over her carpet rags, jumped up with pleased alacrity and hurried out, leaving Miss Hester calmly sorting colored stripes of the same color, Oh, Miss Butler," said little Mar-

And so you brought it," said Jennie, bearing at the two pretty children. What little dears you

Mother knew we were coming.' he announced with nine year old directness. "We had to go home to

"Of course," said Jennie, "like" Lafe Goradh, table the good children that you are. And house, with studdry rather open hints are swans! But I give you some cookies to eat on the way choice of a tenant. After a half home. Little boys should always be hungry," she added diplomatically; considerably rasped in temper, and Jennie said nothing, but smiled

was sent away to these remote mountains because—poor soul!—she like payment for an errand was entirely contrary to the ethics of her divorced without her knowledge."

tain restraint. Accepting anything like payment for an errand was entirely contrary to the ethics of her training. But no such qualms trouterly offended, the insulted individual and the contrary to the ethics of her training. But no such qualms trouterly offended, the insulted individual and the contrary to the ethics of her training. But no such qualms trouterly offended, the insulted individual and the contrary to the ethics of her training. But no such qualms trouterly offended, the insulted individual and the contrary to the ethics of her training. divorced without her knowledge."

"It is perfectly true."

"And the man who did this thing has not only built his fortune on her property but continues to hold it."

"Agein perfectly true."

"Agein perfectly true.

"Irely contrary to the ethics of her training. But no such qualms troubled John who accepted the package with interested alacrity and the important statement: "Cookies are my favorite food."

"Oh, bread and butter — and candy." There was no telling what this very agreeable woman might 'John!" exclaimed Margaret,

John's all right," said Jennie laughing. "And how mother?' she asked. 'And how are father and

'Father's sick," answered the boy quickly, "and mother's lonesome she cried last night."

"Sick! Lone-ome!" exclaimed Jennie; and Margaret hastened to explain: "Father's not really sick; he's not very well and that's why we came to the country—the fresh air, you know," she added wisely. course, mother misses her friends."
'Of course," assented Jennie, with "Of course," assented Jennie, with a remorseful twinge. "I must go the new neighbors. Plain, content

Margaret's eyes shone. "Please do Miss Butler," she said eagerly. "I miss my friends, too," she went on with a grown-up air, adding quickly: But I like the children here ever so much. I don't miss mine," remarked

John coolly. "Don't you, now?" laughed Jennie. I didn't have any," was the la-

conic reply.
"Why, John!" said his sister,
"how can you say that? Don't you nember the Martin boys -" Huh!" from John, "Lonnie Mar tin wasn't no friend of mine-he took

ied my nose all up."
"But you were always playing
with some one," protested Margaret.
"Oh, some of the kids were nice," patronizingly. "But the kids here! Gee! Don't they know how to play the great games though! I tell father all about them and sometimes he plays with me. Father — he's most as good as a boy to play with."

He's a pretty nice father, I ext," said Jennie smiling. Yes, I like him," was the unexpected response, whereat Jennie felt compelled to give him a squeeze.

John, you and I are going to great friends," she said. "Why don't you open your cookies. You have to eat them right away," she admon-I want to put Dona Victoria on ished, "or they'll spoil."

Oh, no, cookies don't spoil," laughed the boy, thoroughly at home with this grown up who could joke just like mother. In the meantime ennie had a sudden inspiration.

How would you both like to com the children were lonely too, she 'Oh, goodie! Oh, goodie!" John

executed a delighted dance, and Margaret flashed an eager, "Oh may we?" which touched Jennie's kind heart more than the boy's demonstrative Come early." she advised, "about

eight o'clock; and you can help me peel the apples,—and help me build the fire out in the back yard,—and then, if you're real good, you can help me stir!" Words failed the children in the face of this impending delight. Fre-

quently since coming to the country they had heard of this mysterious process of making apple butter over an open air fire, but never in their wildest dreams had they beheld them

"No, eight o'clock will do," with a smile and a knowing look at Mar-had in the city such a close and degaret, who crinkled her eyes understandingly. Hertwelve years prompt-You're sure we ed the question: won't be in the way?"

"Not a bit of it!" heartily.
"You're going to help a whole lot!"
And she waved her hand to the two gleeful children who went running down the road through the soft September haze.

Her sister, Miss Hester, was not fond of children, and would probably resent the fact that Jennie had invited these children particularly, for their parents, newcomers, and suste good after such a long walk."

"No, thank you," from the little girl with bashful primness, "mother will be looking for us." The boy looked disappointed. The cookies appealed to him.

"Wolf and the little of news to carry home for their mother to spread in all directions. "Blunt noses!" became an axiomatic warning in the neighborhood, a conservative farming community settled around the post-office. which had come to be known as "They're not the least bit like the Corners." There was great rejoic ing when the Blunts finally moved away; and with neighborly freedom one and another had approached "Lafe" Gordon, the owner of the house, with sundry rather open hints to be more careful next time in the se to have the tie broken; but pape home. Little boys should always be dozen such visite air. Coloub became shall send them packing in the part of the has heard that this poor bungry," she added diplomatically; "Be added diplomatically; "and little girls, too," smiled in the last adviser was sharply informed the flower-like face of small Marthretty, isn't it? Well, that she garet, who smiled back with a cerebrate air. Coloub became shall send them packing in considerably rasped in temper, and interpretable the last adviser was sharply informed that he thought he was perfectly able to manage his own affairs; and he two children, for though encased in

vidual carried the account of the affront to the other neighbors, who unanimously decided that they would indeed mind their own affairs, and likewise leave him and his new tenant, when he got one, severely

Thus the Lynch's coming from the city for their first experience of country life, and pleasantly anticina tive of the open friendliness they were to find there, were unexpected ly thrown back upon themselves by the stolid, not to say chilly, demean or of the people. That they had known the Blunts was set down in their disfavor. Mr. Lynch, the most kindly and genial of men, found his neighbors strangely unresponsive to his advances; and gentle little Mrs Lynch, rather lonely in her new en-vironment, waited in vain for the friendly visits which she had heard were a feature of rural life. The children alone encountered no difficulties, the younger element at The Corners being happily unconscious of, or indifferent to, the quiet but ed, good living, agreeable and generous in the main, the people never stopped to think how unjust they were in visiting Mrs, Blunt's short-comings and Mr. Gordon's curious infirmity of temper on the perfectly innocent Lynchs. But with the per-tinacity of a somewhat empiric community when it gets an idea into its the new family, who found the sur roundings rather bleak and depres sing.

"I've always heard that no one can be as unfriendly as country people, when they are unfriendly," people, when they are unfriendly," said Mrs. Lynch one day, in discussing the unaccountable attitude of the people; "but I never expected to encounter such a pronounced example of it myself," smiling somewhat rue fully.

" Perhaps its just their way, and they don't mean to be unfriendly, answered her husband.

"Well, anyway," rejoined Mrs ynch cheerfully, "the change is Lynch cheerfully, "the change is helping you and that's the main thing. I can put up with worse thing. I can put up with worse things than chilly neighbors just to see you get strong again. And the children certainly do enjoy it. Just look how chubby John is getting!

her husband responded tenderly "You have the happy faculty of making the best of everything. If thes people can resist you very long, they are hopeless," he added laughing.

When the children came running joyously in on their return from Butler's, both together tried to in form their mother of the great delight in store for the next day

"Helping to make apple-butter! Oh, how fine that will be! And how kind of 'Miss Butler to ask you! only wish I could go along, too," with a rather wistful smile.

"Oh, mother, do come!" said Margaret eagerly. "I know Miss Butler would be glad! She said she was coming to see you—and she's awfully nice. She likes John; she laughed at everything he said. And she kissed me, and said I was a little dear-and, oh, she's lovely!" wound up Margaret, somewhat incoherently but with much conviction.

"Oh, yes, mother, do come!" begged ohn. "You can peel apples. I John. don't believe," thoughtfully, don't believe, though."
could peel 'em fast enough."
laughed. "I see you "that I

have a job for me. Well, I'll think about it. If I thought Miss Butler voted circle of friends should now have to resort to artifice, however innocent, to win any sort of friendliness from these strange undemon-strative people. "But it's for Jack's sake," she defended herself. "And we have to live here for a time. It is curious how they act. There may be some reason—yet what could there be? I believe I'll go with the Januic found herself entertaining a few qualms as she went back to the sut home,"—and she laugued aloud,

it won't be any worse than being left entirely alone There was a gentle bustle of excitement in the Butler home in the garet Lynch styly, as Jennie opened the door, "the man at the post office gave us this letter for your sister. He said it would be so late when the carrier got around in the morning and he thought she was auxious to the place they rented had been an object they rented had been peling apples since the early breakfast, while Miss Hester had delicately washed up the breakfast dishes, enveloped in a large approach. object of universal detestation. Mrs. siderable gloom. For Jennie's anti-Blunt had been a gossip, and the children had rendered themselves Miss Hester had been decidedly "put obnoxious to the neighbors by the facility with which they picked up stray items of news to carry home I hate children cluttering up the

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