

A DAUGHTER OF 'THE SIERRA

BY CHRISTIAN REID

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A MEETING AND ITS RESULT

By one of those accidents on which often hinge, or appear to hinge, the destinies of human life, two men—one entering the other leaving the Crocker Building in San Francisco on a certain day—almost ran into each other. They recoiled with mutual apologies, simultaneously recognized an acquaintance and shook hands. One was slender, alert, extremely well dressed, with the keen American business face, clean-shaven in deference to fashion, and wearing eye-glasses above a prominent nose. The other was taller and more sinewy, lean as a grayhound, tanned deeply by the sun, carelessly attired but with the unmistakable air of a gentleman, and an equally unmistakable look of good blood about the clear-cut contours of the face, with its drooping brown moustache and steady gray eyes.

"Lloyd! Didn't know you were in San Francisco," said the first man, whose name was Armistead, "Been here long?"

"Since yesterday," Philip Lloyd answered. "And you?"

"Oh! I'm here constantly now, except when I am away—which sounds like an Irish ball, but isn't it?"

"Not a mining expert," the other laughed. "Have you been away lately?"

"I'm just back from Puget Sound, where I have been examining a large property."

"For Trafford, I suppose?"

"Yes. All my expert work is done for him at present."

"So I've heard, and—oddly enough—I am just going up to see him. Do you know whether or not he has any place I could fit into?"

Armistead gave the speaker a glance as keen as that of a hawk.

"I should say that there wouldn't be much difficulty in finding a place into which to fit a man like you," he answered. "By the way, haven't you been a good deal in Old Mexico?"

"I have been there for the greater part of the last five years."

"Prospecting?"

"Part of the time; at other times connected with some large mines."

"Where are you in from last?"

"The State of Durango."

Armistead put his hand on the other's arm.

"Don't go up to see Trafford," he said. "Come and lunch with me."

"But—"

"Don't you understand? I have something to propose to you—something to your advantage, as the advertisements for missing heirs say."

"In that case, I'm at your service," said Lloyd, turning with an air of decision which matched the clear-cut, sunburnt face and steady eyes.

"They went to a restaurant near by where Armistead called for a private room. Lloyd lifted his brows but made no remark, and when they were alone the former explained.

"I never talk business in a public place," he said, "even when it isn't quite so 'private and particular' as this."

"If the business is private and particular," said Lloyd, "I am afraid I am not the man."

"Oh, yes you are!" Armistead interrupted. "So exactly the man that our meeting strikes me in the light of a remarkably lucky accident. It's astonishing how these accidents happen to me—how people turn up just when I want them! I knew that you were the very person I wanted as soon as I remembered your connection with Mexico."

"What has that to do with it?"

"Only this, that I wish you to go immediately—with me."

"You are going to examine a mine?"

"Or to recover one—well here comes the waiter! We'll give our order and then you shall hear all about it."

The order having been given, with great concentration of attention on Armistead's part, and great indifference on Lloyd's, the waiter departed, and the successful mining expert, leaning back in his chair looked at the unsuccessful prospector.

"If you are from the State of Durango," he said, "probably you know the districts of San Andres de la Sierra and Topia?"

"Better than I know the streets of San Francisco," Lloyd responded. "Have you ever heard of the Santa Cruz Mine, located somewhere between those two places?"

"Everybody in that country knows the Santa Cruz Mine. It's nearer Topia than San Andres, though, and it can't be bought."

"How do you know that?"

"From common report. It's a great ore-producer, and there's no inducement for the owners to sell."

"Who are supposed to be the owners?"

"It belongs partly, or wholly perhaps, to a woman—Donna Beatriz Calderon."

"Hum!—What kind of a woman is she?"

Lloyd lifted his shoulders. "Queen sabe!" he said, dropping into a familiar phrase.

"You must have heard something about the owner of the richest mine in Durango," Armistead persisted.

Lloyd sought in the depths of his memory for a moment, and then produced a nugget of information.

"I think I have heard that she is a widow," he said.

Armistead shook his head. "They may call her so," he remarked, "but in point of fact she is a divorced woman."

Lloyd stared.

"Impossible!" he said. "The species doesn't exist in Mexico."

"It exists in this case; for the husband was an American, who came to the States, got a divorce and remarried here."

"Do you know him?"

"I had just left him when I met you."

"You don't mean Trafford?"

"I mean him exactly. It seems that when he was a young fellow, owning no more than his mule and saddle, he wandered down into Mexico, prospecting. Up in the Sierra Madre, back of Culiacan, he ran across some extremely rich mines owned by a Mexican, who had also a daughter. Trafford was always practical, so he made love to the daughter, married her and got possession of the mines—as her wedding portion, probably."

"Then left her where he found her, I suppose?"

"No, he must have behaved rather decently—at first. He brought her with him to San Francisco, where, as he states briefly, she cried all the time. So he packed her back to her Mexican home, gave her an allowance, and proceeded to obtain a divorce. He then married the present Mrs. Trafford—woman of fashion, leader of society, all that sort of thing—went on, prospered, and became the man of millions he is today."

Lloyd looked the disgust he felt.

"Did the Mexican woman know that she was divorced?" he asked.

"I can't say," Armistead answered; "but there seems no particular reason why she should have been informed."

"Did he return her fortune?"

Armistead regarded the speaker with a smile.

"You have been so long out of the world that you have become a trifle quixotic," he observed. "I don't imagine that Trafford ever dreamed of such a thing. He kept the fortune to his own great benefit, but he has always paid regularly the allowance of the lady in Mexico. Hence his foolish injury, as well as exasperated by a difficulty which has arisen."

"I hope she has plucked up spirit enough to demand her own."

"I fancy there would never have been any trouble with her, but there's a daughter—"

"So he cast off not only his wife but his child?"

"As reasonable!" said Armistead a little impatiently. "What on earth could a man who has it in him to rise as Trafford has risen do with a Mexican wife?"

"If you fancy that Mexican women are uncivilized, let me tell you—"

"You don't need to tell me anything. I know Mexico—if not as well as you do, at least pretty well. And I know that there is no country in the world where class distinctions are more marked. Well, just understand that we are not talking of the daughter of some great Hidalgo, with a princely estate and a pedigree going back to the conquistadores, but of a woman from the wilds of the Sierra Madre, of Maya Indian blood, whose father did not even know the value of the mines he possessed—"

"I should say that she would know what could Trafford do with such a woman?"

"He could have been true to her, Maya Indian or not, especially since all his fortune is built on hers. I should say; but, then, I'm probably quixotic, if not idiotic. So go on with your story—what is the daughter going to do?"

"She holds possession of the Santa Cruz Mine in the name of her mother, and refuses to recognize any right of ownership in Trafford."

"Good for her!"

"Possibly; but not good for Trafford. Consequently he wants me to go down there and recover the mine."

"Do you mean to say that he is going to fight for it?"

"We hope that there will be no need to fight, although he has papers signed by the father of—ah—Donna Beatriz, which establish his title."

"I wonder if the father of Donna Beatriz knew what he was signing?"

"As you remarked a moment ago, 'Queen sabe!' And I may add that the question doesn't concern us."

"Isn't Trafford rich enough to leave one mine to his rightful possessor, who is also his own child?"

"You ought to know that no man, according to American ideas, is rich enough to give up anything he can hold. And there are reasons why Trafford wants and needs that mine particularly at the present time. I told you that I am just back from Puget Sound. Perhaps you've heard of the big smelter up there, owned by the Puget Sound Reduction Company? Well, Trafford is the company—at least he controls four-fifths of the stock. Now, there are several millions invested in the smelter and the railroad which has been built to some mines up in the mountains, where it was expected to obtain an unlimited supply of ore. But—this is confidential, observe—so far from being unlimited the production of these mines has proved so extremely limited that they are of very little value for supplying the smelter, which has an enormous capacity. I am just back from making an exhaustive examination of them, and when Trafford heard my report he simply said: 'We must get a supply of ore that can be depended on also, where or lose our investment.' Then

he told me about the Santa Cruz Mine, which must be an immense property containing the very class of ores needed."

"Isn't he the whole world to buy ores for his smelter?"

"They are already buying ores from Australia, South America and Mexico; but I don't need to point out to him that the profit of buying is one thing and of owning is another. Trafford has submitted for some time to the holding of the Santa Cruz Mine by the enterprising young woman in Mexico, but now that he needs the ore so badly he doesn't intend to submit to it longer. That's the whole case."

"What is he going to do?"

"He is sending me to Mexico with diplomatic powers to negotiate for the recovery of the mine; and, as you can see of great assistance to me, I propose to take you along."

"Thanks! But I don't care to assist in such a business."

"Nonsense!" said Armistead, sharply. "What are Trafford's affairs to you? And you will have nothing to do with my work."

"Why do you want me, then?"

"I want you because I suppose that you know the country thoroughly, its language, its customs, not to speak of its topography. And we may make the trip profitable in more ways than one. I have long had a fancy to go down there to pick up mining property, but have always lacked time. Now I take it for granted that you can put your hand on some good prospects—"

"On a few, perhaps."

"Well, you can secure them together, and you know whether or not my recommendation will help to sell them."

"I know, of course, that your recommendation will sell anything."

"Then don't turn your back on the opportunity I'm offering you—an opportunity to realize a great profit from the knowledge of the country your years of prospecting in it have given you."

"They were pretty hard years," Lloyd admitted, "and I shouldn't mind realizing something from them—for no man knows better than I what a country of great chances it is; but if I agree to go, you must understand that I'll have nothing to do with robbing these women of their mine by diplomatic or other means."

Armistead laughed.

"My dear fellow," he said genially, "I assure you that I should never think of employing you in any diplomatic capacity. And we have no intention of using other means."

TO BE CONTINUED

THE CALL OF BURTON

John Burton sat before Father Paul and looked hard at the point above the head of the aged missionary.

"Well," remarked the good Father, "what are you going to do about it?"

"Confession, I suppose you mean." The pioneer woodman shifted uneasily on his chair.

"Yes, and to mend your ways, too, John," gently said the priest.

The man shifted again and then broke out petulantly:

"Why, I never killed any one. I never stole anything. I've lived in the community for years and I'm considered eminently respectable. I don't owe a man a penny, and," he added with a smile, "sometimes I find time and money to do a little charity here and there. I can't see why you take things so seriously. I think I'm—"

Father Paul, Benedictine missionary from St. Maurus' Abbey, stared steadily for a full minute at Burton. Slowly the red crept over the face of the rancher.

It was nearly forty years since a bright, energetic young man left his good Catholic home fired with ambition for wealth and adventure, and when John Burton came to the west a trackless forest lay before him. He plunged into the unbroken wood and cleared a homestead for himself amid such hardships as are ever encountered upon entry into a virgin country. Soon after he married. With the years came children and prosperity. For lack of opportunity he had become careless of religious duty until now he scarcely remembered the days when he as a boy, regularly attended Holy Mass and received the Sacraments. True, his children had matters as quite settled except, perhaps, for the hospitality extended at odd and infrequent intervals of time to a pious missionary who journeyed into Hemlock Centers seeking the scattered members of his flock. Deep down and hidden away in Burton's mind lay a thought, of course, that some time he would approach the Sacraments, but he had stored up his thought so long that it had grown almost a second nature to him to argue the old, deceiving device of the evil one—plenty of time; why hurry? And now the troublesome thought was upon him as the priest awaited an answer.

"I suppose you refer to that marriage ceremony, Father," he said slowly. "Really, I intend to have it looked after by a priest some time, but what's the hurry? After all it's only a matter of form and the judge performed the ceremony all right and—"

The good Father broke in with indignation.

"For these years you've been talking this way, John. You are not ignorant of Catholic doctrine and you know this is serious, and were you to go before your God this way, I don't know—"

The sentence remained unfinished as Father Paul dubiously shook his head.

"Well, Father, next time you come I'll—"

"John, Burton do now what you would wish to have done at the hour of death. You know quite well enough Catholics cannot marry before a judge. You can't plead any excuse now. Moreover, isn't it true that aside from the seriousness of it all you would feel better about it, John? Right here and now let me perform this ceremony. This is your opportunity once more. For the past ten years He has sent one of His servants into this part of the country, and yet you keep putting off righting this serious matter—wonder you have not the grace to go to Confession. You are Catholic enough to know that before you can receive any Sacrament worthily, you must make your peace with God. God had decreed marriage a Holy Sacrament which must be received only at the hands of His priest, you know that. No matter what the world may say, nor how any civil tribunal may enact laws, the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony is not, and can never be a mere simple contract, to be entered easily or set aside according to the whims of the contracting parties. All the judges in the world cannot set you right before God, though, as you say, you are eminently respectable before the eyes of the world. You know all these things, and yet you procrastinate. When are you going to settle your conscience?"

Father Paul arose and paced the room twice and turned facing Burton squarely.

The big rancher looked gloomily into the fire.

Father Paul continued: "Sir, you are trifling with grace. You've been in these woods so long, and you've been away from your duties so long, and you've been so taken up with temporal things that you are a Catholic only in name. You're sliding down an abyss and I know not how much longer God will suffer you. You are taking terrible chances—no Sacraments, no Easter duty, no fasting, no prayer, no Mass, no making, once again I beg of you before I return to the mission to make your peace with God. Let's have that ceremony performed and you go on—and come up to the Mission and receive Holy Communion—it's many a year since you've done so, John, to Confession right now—it's already within Easter tide—then you make it your business day after tomorrow—it's Sunday, I hope you remember that?"

The good father spoke earnestly and Burton winced under his stinging rebuke.

"But in the eyes of the world?" persisted Burton, "everything is—"

"The eyes of the world are not the eyes of God," interposed the priest. "God is not mocked."

The woodman strode to the window of his mountainous home and gazed thoughtfully into the twilight. A memory of his first Holy Communion came to him. He saw again his dear pious mother, now long at rest with her God, as she fondly caressed him after that happy morning of long ago when he had received his Lord for the first time. He heard her words as she bade him be true to his Church and to his God. He sickened in his heart as he recalled how far he had strayed from that beloved mother's teachings. His eyes moistened and he had difficulty in seeing aright the stamping burro of the missionary as it pawed the ground impatiently to be off.

Slowly he turned and spoke. "I know you are right, Father, and I'm determined to settle my conscience with God the very next time you come. I pledge my word, and you know the word of a Burton is—"

"Do it now, John; do it now. God alone knows whether either you or I may be here 'next time,' as you call it."

Burton laughed nervously. "Five minutes is all I ask before I die, Father. I'll do it."

And how do you know that God will in His mercy extend to you five minutes after all these wasted moments of grace? Can you answer He will allow you even one minute? John, be careful! These years of service for Him have taught me one great lesson, if no other. God is not mocked. Long will he knock at a man's door, but one day there's a time when He ceases. Then He leaves the soul to follow its own wayward course to its unhappy end. We missionaries have sometimes been witnesses of such things. But I see I cannot persuade you, and the holy old priest sighed and held out his hand.

"May God bestow one more grace upon you, and I pray our Blessed Lady may awaken you to a sense of your danger, trifling thus with God's graces. Good-by."

Father Paul hastily mounted his burro and bounded into the gathering darkness. He had advanced scarcely thirty feet when the voice of Burton brought the priest to a sudden halt. He turned the head of the unwilling burro to the shed and quickly dismounted.

"Father, I'm decided. After all there is no real reason why all should not be made right to-night before you go. I'm rather ashamed to call you back, but maybe it's better."

"Of course it's better—what can be better than making one's peace with God."

Both passed into the house and an hour later a marriage ceremony had been performed after the rites of Holy Mother Church and the wreny soul of John Burton sought the peace found only in the tribunal of penance. When Father Paul returned

to his burro his heart was light and he felt his hard trip into Hemlock Centers had yielded precious fruit for the Master. For many a weary mile the missionary wound about the mountain trail, up and up till he reached the little mission Abbey of St. Maurus in the heart of the Nes Perces. He was cold and tired with the journey, but he and his thoughts were lost in the boundless love of God and His infinite patience with sinners. In his heart rang the joyful, saving message: "O Most Precious Blood, source of Eternal Life, price and ransom of the entire world! O Inestimable Balm springing from the Fountain of Immense Love!" Thus in loving colloquy with the Father, the pious missionary reached the Mission. His faithful burro under cover, Father Paul stole into the little chapel and poured out his soul in fervent thanksgiving over the return of this wanderer to the fold, and an hour later found the good Father in peaceful slumber upon his couch of poverty off the little sacristy.

He knew not how long he had slept when he was suddenly awakened by heavy blows upon his door and amidst the noise he could hear the boyish voice of someone calling: "Father Paul, Father Paul; are you there?"

The priest arose quickly, opened the door and beheld the ten-year-old son of Burton before him, who held the rein of a trembling horse, panting from exertion.

"The boy was crying bitterly."

"Can you come, Father?" he sobbed brokenly. "Mother wants you. Papa was instantly killed, a tree falling through the roof of the barn while he was doing chores to-night."

The devoted priest nodded his head in silence while he went to the shed for his burro. In his soul surged the words of Holy Writ: "Watch and pray for ye know not the day nor the hour!"—Z. Marie Hager.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A SAINT

SERMON DELIVERED ON ALL SAINTS' DAY BY CARDINAL GIBBONS

The Guardian, Nov. 1916

"I will tell you this morning what a saint is not, and then what constitutes a saint."

"There are some who imagine that a saint is one of those who read in ancient history and who belongs to an almost extinct species; some antediluvian who flourished like the giants of former ages, or King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table, but whose race is well nigh run out, and whose place is now rarely found on earth."

Now, thank God, the generation of saints is not extinct. They exist in our day. They are to be found in this city and under our own eyes. They are in every congregation of Baltimore. They sanctify their homes by the integrity of their character and by their domestic virtues. Their lives are hidden with Christ in God.

LIKE THE PHARISES OF OLD

"And these noble spirits are as unconscious of their increase in holiness as they are of their physical growth; this is all the better for them. It is only when they begin to view themselves with complacency and to have an exalted opinion of themselves that they take a step backward, and are in danger of imitating the Pharisee who boasted that he was not like the rest of men."

"There are others who fancy that to be a saint one must wear the cowl of a monk, or the habit of a nun, or the surplice and cassock of a priest. But this would be taking a very narrow view of the scheme of redemption. The Gospel says that God wishes 'all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.' Now we know that there can be no salvation without sanctification. The words of Scripture: 'Be ye holy, for I, the Lord, your God, am holy' were addressed to the priests and laymen alike in the Old Law. They certainly apply with equal force to all who live under the New Dispensation."

"A few chosen souls are called to the religious and apostolic life. But thank God, saints innumerable are found among the laity who wear no special badge. Their only distinctive garb is the invisible white robe of innocence, or the purple robe of penance, or the red robe of mortification, who like Paul, 'die daily' to themselves."

FALSE NOTIONS OF SAINTLINESS

"There are others, again, who entertain the notion that to be saints, persons must spend half their time in prayer, the other half in corporal mortification. This mode of life would suit very well a holy anchorite, or woman like devout Ann, who 'departed not from the Temple, but by fasting and prayers, worshipped night and day.'"

"But it would not befit the bulk of Christians whose daily life is devoted to secular and domestic pursuits. For these duties cannot be omitted without violating conscience and deranging the good order of society or of the family."

"A man who would spend in church the time which should be consecrated to his business affairs, would be apt to bring religious exercises into disrepute by performing them out of due season. It is true indeed that Christ, who was given to contemplation, is praised by the Master for 'having chosen the better part,'

but it is equally true that her sister Martha who was occupied in household affairs, had a share in the esteem and benefaction of our Lord."

NOT SAD AND GLOOMY EITHER

"There are others who picture to themselves a saint as an individual of a sad or gloomy disposition, of a melancholy and dejected aspect, a knight, as it were, of the sorrowful figure. Our Saviour gives us a different view of a servant of God. He tells us that even in our penitential acts, we should maintain a cheerful demeanor. 'When ye fast,' He says, 'be not like the hypocrites sad, for they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to fast. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not to men to fast but to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee.'"

"The saints are conspicuous for habitual cheerfulness, because they have an upright conscience, and cheerfulness is the fruit of a good conscience, or of a soul at peace with God and men."

"What then is a saint? A saint is one who keeps the Commandments of God and the precepts of the Church, and discharges with fidelity the duties of his state of life."

PATIENT WITH TRIALS OF LIFE

"Another characteristic of a saint is that he bears with Christian fortitude and patience the trials of life, whether imposed on him by the inscrutable visitations of Providence or inflicted by the malice of men, or resulting from the infirmities of his nature. Should he be so unfortunate as to stumble and fall in the spiritual combat, (for even the saints on earth are not exempt from human frailty,) he will promptly rise again, and will cleanse himself from the moral stains he has contracted, and will renew the conflict with re-doubled energy."

"Now it is in the power of every Christian, aided by Divine grace, to observe the ordinances of God and of the Church; to comply with the obligations incident to his situation in the world; to carry with resignation the cross laid upon him by his Heavenly Father, and to wage an incessant warfare against his passions and vicious inclinations."

"St. Bernard, after embracing the monastic state, was accustomed to stimulate his fervor by asking himself this question: 'Bernard, why earnest thou hither? We should also ask ourselves this first question of the Catechism: 'Why wert thou created? Why art thou in this world? What is thy mission in life?' And the answer is, God created me that I might know Him and love Him and serve Him in this world, and be happy with Him forever in the next. In other words, God created me that I might sanctify myself; and if I know God, and love and serve Him, I will be a saint indeed. 'This is eternal life,' says our Saviour, 'that we know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.' Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,' says Jeremiah, 'and let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glorieth glory in this that he understandeth and knoweth Me.'"

WEALTH NOT REAL GOAL

"Let me suppose that you have succeeded in amassing wealth, till you have become as rich as Croesus of old, or as Rockefeller of our day. Let all your affairs prosper. Let every enterprise you engage in become a mine of gold. Let me suppose that you attain the highest honors which this world can bestow; that you are more feared than Alexander; more honored than Caesar; more admired than Washington."

"Let me suppose that you revel in pleasures and delights; that your life is one continuous round of sunshine without a single cloud to darken the horizon; that your pathway is strewn with flowers. Yet if you fall in the one thing necessary of attaining a life of godliness, you have missed your vocation; you have frustrated the end for which God had created you, and are in His sight, 'poor and miserable and blind and naked.' You would be like a splendid vessel which sailed on the ocean with prosperous winds till, on approaching the harbor, it foundered, and its precious cargo was sunk in the depth of the sea. Alas! what will it profit us to have steered our course majestically and with flying colors through the ocean of life, if we bring to the harbor of eternity nothing but a soul shipwrecked by sin?"

"What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

EXCELLENCE KINGLY TITLES

"No matter what may be the social distinction existing between you, all of you, whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, possess in common the one glorious title of Christian. That is a name you would not exchange for all the high sounding titles of kings and emperors. You glory in that appellation and are justly proud of it."

"But the title of Christian is not an empty sound, but is full of solemn significance. It has annexed to it corresponding obligations. For what is a Christian? A Christian, as the very name implies, is a disciple or follower of Christ. A Christian is one who keeps before his mental vision his Divine Saviour that he may endeavor to reproduce in himself the virtues of his heavenly Model. Christ, in one who walks in the footsteps of his blessed Redeemer. In a word, a Christian is another Christ."

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