

**MARIPOSILLA:  
A NOVEL**

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Mariposilla: A Novel by Mrs. Charles Stewart Daggett

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**MRS. CHARLES STEWART DAGGETT**

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# MARIPOSILLA

*A Novel*

BY  
MRS. CHARLES STEWART DAGGETT

DAGGETT, MARY STEWART



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# MARIPOSILLA.

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## CHAPTER I.

WHEN I abandoned the home of my girlhood, and took my delicate child to California, I started upon the journey goaded only by apathetic hopes, sustained only by the desperation of despair.

Marjorie was my all, and I could no longer endure the tension of her gradual decline. As I watched her fade away, I realized that my closest friends were becoming reconciled to my bereavement, with the philosophical fortitude of spectators. When I was coolly advised "not to sacrifice pecuniary interests for the sentiment of a hopeless experiment," an outraged love grew strong and defiant. The calculating counsel, so cruel and unexpected, strengthened, at last, the timid resolution. Even the silent walls of my house oppressed, while an absolute hatred

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of the machinery of life seized my tired soul. I determined to be free at any price. Fresh courage entered my life, and impelled me to remove, without a pang, most cherished household gods. My relief was immoderate when everything was gone. Then I experienced for the first time in years the sweet exhilaration that welcomes, breathlessly, a change. In my dreams I had apparitions of purple mountains, and long quiet days purified with sunshine. Suddenly, into my sad life there came new hope, kindled, it seemed, from the very ashes of an abortive past.

Before I realized the initial steps of my undertaking, anticipated perplexities had been absorbed by the novel conditions of our journey. Four days away from the old home and New York found me happier than for months, when I saw for the first time a flush upon the pallid cheeks of my child, the faintest reflection of the coveted boon I sought.

A fresh excitement made me strong for each new duty. The present at last held all that I craved. When I watched my child among her pillows, so much better that she prattled of great plans to be



carried out on the far away Coast, I loved even then the land. To see the little one sleep, and watch for her awakening among the great quiet mountains, was to my heart an ecstasy. "Dear Mamma," she cried, clasping her thin hands as the train clambered close to the silent monarchs of the West, "I want to touch they!"

"Yes, sweetheart," I said; "When Marjorie is strong and well, she shall not only touch the dear mountains, but she shall crawl into their very arms! Mamma will take her into the beautiful cañons, where little streams always sing to the tall ferns; we shall have a picnic, and perhaps the fairies will come! When my little girl sees the Fairy Queen she can ask for a boon, like Mabel in the song. Perhaps the Queen will say: 'So this is little Marjorie, who came all the way from New York to see us? Marjorie is a good child, and was very patient during her long journey. She took her bitter medicine bravely, and now she must be rewarded. What shall be done for her, my Fairies?'

"Then perhaps one kind fairy may say, 'Her cheeks must grow pink like a La France rose'; and another, 'Her limbs

must grow strong like a perfect tree'; and a third, 'Her eyes must be bright like the stars, and she must soon be well, and as happy as she is pretty.'

Thus I romanced to my patient child, snatching an inspiration from every mile that drove us into the far country.

When we entered the wide, trackless desert—the home of distorted yuccas, which stretched gaunt arms to the cloudless sky, like hopeless criminals doomed to the intermediate wastes of purgatory—I knew that the "Happy Valley" lay beyond. Then my child was sleeping for long hours at a time; nor did she awaken until the last yucca had vanished from the desert's edge; then she opened her eyes in Wonderland! For the overland train had completed its conquest. The great mountain chains had been passed over in safety, while far behind, fields of snow and shrieking blasts were forgotten, as we glided peacefully into the beautiful Valley of San Gabriel, that Pet Marjorie might live.

Our long journey was ended. We could rest, although not perfectly until after leaving the pleasant hotel known as the East San Gabriel, when I hoped to find in

the old Spanish home of the Doña Maria Del Valle the coveted seclusion of which I had dreamed.

From the beginning of our journey, everyone had been interested in Marjorie.

I soon found myself accepting small attentions from sympathetic strangers as naturally as I would have accepted, a few weeks before, the favors of old friends.

It thus happened that I first heard of the Doña Maria Del Valle, through a lady and her son with whom I traveled. "A most perfect place for Pet Marjorie would be with the Doña Maria Del Valle," Mrs. Sanderson had told me, shortly after our arrival in San Gabriel, when I inquired of all for a home that would shelter us for at least a year. Marjorie must not live in a hotel, exposed to the constant excitement of robust children and irresponsible strangers.

Besides, I desired to try not only the winter of Southern California, but the long, unimpassioned summer, so conducive to the restoration of the delicate.

My new friend had spent the previous season in San Gabriel; she was familiar with the locality, and offered at once to