

JUAN GARCIA BY DIEGO RIVERA

Juan Garcia is a character invented by Diego Rivera who is not Diego Rivera the Mexican artist though this Diego Rivera is as real as the sun shimmering off the ocean outside the walls of his villa. So is Dona Elena, his wife. The gardener, Old Christoph, may or may not be real.

Diego Rivera was a professor of world philosophy. His lot in life was to read as many books of philosophy as he could lay his hands on and then go tell his students what he had discovered. He spent most of the afternoon, every day but Sunday when he read the Bible, sitting in a big leather chair in front of the mahogany desk in his study reading the works of other philosophers. He insisted against Dona Elena's noisy and frequent protests that he needed a special place to read and think. She accused him of locking himself in a dark room away from the light of the world. This was the subject of their evening meal's conversation day after day as long as Old Christoph could remember.

Old Christoph could catch bits of their disharmonious chitchat darting like fierce little birds through the olive trees. He would lean on his rake to listen, shaking his torn straw hat. Dona Elena seemed to finish with the same flourish, "Day after day...in that dark room...hidden away...from the light...of the world."

Diego Rivera denied all this but it was true. He needed some place to hide, not just from Dona Elena, but from certain facts that threatened him as heavily as the dark clouds that edged over the hills behind his villa in late afternoon.

He furnished his study with fine bookcases, a curio of carved objects, plush easy chairs and a sofa, vintage brandies and imported cigars. Instead of reading, he merely sipped his brandy all afternoon and puffed helplessly on his cigars, exhaling the smoke through the jalousies of the windows opening to the ocean. Just before the dinner hour, he would scribble a few notes and save them for his opening comments at the next morning's class. His students, hungover and stupid, never seemed to question his thoughts. The occasional papers he was able to publish satisfied his fellow professors well enough that they left him alone.

It had not always been so. When he built the villa as a young man he envisioned tranquil days with his dark, lovely bride, savoring the secrets of Unamuno and Spinoza. But the ideas, the

great thoughts, never came. At first he would stare for hours at the flicker of the sun off the crystal-clear waves, thinking nothing. In some ways he began to feel shame at his incompetence. At other times, he felt positive the path to truth awaited him in these moments, a revelation would be made known to him, that he would snap to and begin writing a revolutionary thesis about the essence of life.

And why shouldn't this be so? The only son of a wealthy banker, Diego Rivera had been his father's good child, had faithfully studied at leading universities, undergone an apprenticeship in world affairs at his father's side and returned to his studies with his father's blessing. With both parents dead he inherited enough money for ten families, had leisure and time enough to absorb as many ideas as a lifetime would allow.

Anyone with so much wealth might have become a statesman or a soldier or a physicist or a playboy. But all those occupations required a high level of energy, something Diego Rivera never mustered. The university was nearby and so was a town large enough to indulge any need he or Dona Elena might have had for luxury or pleasure. He went from one degree to another, mathematics to semantics, obtained his credentials in philosophy and was awarded a professorship. At first, Dona Elena had been charmed by the prospect of a life in a richly decorated villa overlooking the ocean. Twice a week the masseuse drove up from the town to rub unforeseen anxieties from their limbs and torsos. Dona Elena attended luncheons with the Governor's wife, had her hair curled in an airconditioned salon and played cards with her friends. They went to the symphony, to the drama, to the cinema. They discussed ideas with friends from the university after visiting with scholars and poets, newsmakers and politicians.

Maybe they would have enjoyed a richer life if they had welcomed children. But no Dona Elena had a female problem. And she never seemed the type to suckle an infant or wanted to gain thirty pounds. She enjoyed being thin and having her nails perfect. Even so she began to whine, to complain. Diego Rivera could do nothing right. So and so was building a huge highway across the country. So and so had been appointed director of the national museum. So and so was now a four-star general. But, "You, Diego Rivera...spend your days...locked up in a dark study...hidden away...from the light...of the world."

He consulted his friend, the psychiatrist. Of course, he told him, he performed his husbandly duties regularly and with style. He catered to her every sensibility, he was polite, he

smelled good, he tried to be gentle. On the days she was tired or seemed troubled, he backed away and stroked her back. He took her out to dinner at fine restaurants or humored her with a vacation to the Capitol for some shopping. What did she expect, a movie idol, a prime minister, the winner of a Nobel Prize?

With his money, Diego Rivera could just as easily have sent Dona Elena away and hired a concubine, or two or three concubines for that matter. They would have been on call and pleased him as his appetites dictated. But Diego Rivera was no swine. He was a gentleman and it pained him that he could not keep a lady of society in smiles and excitement. He branded himself a dullard and scowled across the marble dinner table at Dona Elena with a combination of self-reproach and a murderous impulse.

One evening after a particularly venomous session Diego Rivera walked the path downhill to the road from the villa near the ocean. He sat on a round gray rock and puffed one of his favorite cigars. He looked down a footpath winding along the cliff and had a fantasy. The fantasy was of a tall man, a head taller than him, a stringy bag over his shoulder, unshaven and very thin, hair like porcupine quills, muscles solid and durable as rubber, neck like an old boot, teeth sharp, black and jagged, walking devil-may-care up the dirt path. This fellow squats down and lights a cigarette he has rolled readily between his stained fingers. His sandals are falling apart. But he doesn't give a shit, does he?

"Tell me, have you traveled far?" Diego Rivera asks this bedraggled man who has a skull for a face.

"Yes, yes," a man who called himself Juan Garcia said and sat on the ground.

"I'd like to hear a little bit about your travels, friend. I'd like to spend a little time with you, if I may. In exchange, let me grant you shelter and food and whatever assistance I can give you."

"Sounds like a reasonable request to me," Juan Garcia answered, licking his dry lips, smiling in a sharp, crooked way.

“Come then,” Diego Rivera replied, taking his hand and helping him to stand. Poor Juan, he looked emaciated and he walked gingerly on his bare feet, slightly stooped and unsteady on long stick legs.

Walking together this way, Diego Rivera supporting Juan Garcia under his elbow, it took them sometime to shuffle uphill to the villa which stood on a cliff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Diego Rivera opened the wide, wrought iron gate to give Juan Garcia admittance to the courtyard. Juan Garcia stood there a moment to take in the large round fountain in the center and all the beautiful trees and flowers. Old Christoph noted that Diego Rivera had put on some weight and his short-cropped curly hair had thinned considerably on top. His beard was knit close to his face now and had whitened on the edges.

No sooner had the two men entered the heavy wooden doors of the villa than the birds of discourse winged their way through the garden. Old Christoph could hear loud, sudden bursts from the mouth of Dona Elena. “Who...in the name of heaven...is this wretched looking creature...and why...have you brought him...into our home?”

To his credit, Diego Rivera proceeded to his study and help Juan Garcia to a plush, upholstered chair near a large stained-glass window. He poured him some ice water from an emblazoned pitcher, set it on a bronze coaster on a small carved cherry table and walked back behind his desk where he seated himself importantly in his imposing leather chair. Juan Garcia slurped the cold water and sucked bits of ice.

“You see,” Diego Rivera began, “I see a kind of cosmic plan in all this, in this meeting between you and me. Here I am, a man of great wealth and prestige who has gone nowhere, and you, by appearances, a man down on his luck, has gone many places and seen many things.”

“True,” Juan Garcia agreed, sucking another piece of ice and motioning to an inlaid cigar box. “Mind if I have one, friend,” he asked sheepishly.

“Help yourself. At any time,” Diego Rivera answered, opening the lid and holding the box out to him. “My finest. At any time.”

Both men bit off and spat out the ends of their cigars and struck long wooden matches to light them.

“Yes, I see us spending many a night together discussing matters of great importance, me helping you, you helping me,” Diego Rivera went on, looking out his seaside window at the stars. “I am weighted down with grave problems, grave problems. A problem of love, a problem of life.”

“Ah, going bankrupt then,” Garcia nodded.

“Oh no, plenty of money, great financial resources.”

“Um, cancer, or a bad heart.”

“Oh no, healthy as an ox.”

“Ah, your wife has taken a lover. Believe me, worse things happen.”

“Oh no, not that. Just a malaise. A sickness of the spirit. I don’t enjoy who I am and yet I am too tired and bored to embark on anything else. I think of a project, get all excited about it, then it dies right there, right then. It seems too large. Overwhelming. It would take three lifetimes. I’d have to start over. Become an engineer. Study the law. Lift weights and train like an Olympian. I get an idea, jot down my notes, promise to research it and prepare to write it down. But the time arrives and nothing. And then I come to the dinner table empty handed. My lovely wife sits across from me, waiting. But I have nothing exciting to tell her, nothing with which to light her eyes or conjure her smile. And our lovemaking is nothing much anymore, a ritual and nothing more. I tell you, I am getting old doing nothing.”

Juan Garcia savored his cigar and nodded toward a brandy carafe of the finest cut glass.

“Ah, I have had not even a whiff of spirits for so long as I can remember. Just a tiny glass, please,” he asked and smiled.

“Of course, I should have offered,” Diego Rivera said, pouring them each a small snifter.

“Ah, of great quality,” Juan Garcia congratulated him.

Diego Rivera nodded at the compliment and they both looked out the window together sipping and humming their pleasure at the warmth of the brandy filtering down their gullets.

“You must be tired,” Diego Rivera finally said.

“Yes, and in need of a bath.”

Diego Rivera wanted to prolong this first encounter, fearing a long bedtime harangue with Dona Elena over the sudden appearance of his new guest. He did have a class the next day and his routine called for an early retirement for sleep.

He introduced Juan Garcia to Marisa, the maid, who was also very real, and she in turn showed him to his room, a splendid accommodation of carved woods, golden candlesticks, and imported marble, with windows on every wall opening to the salt air, and views that captured both sunrise and sunset.

Juan Garcia found a complete toilet in the high-ceilinged bath: a gold handled razor, rounded bars of soap, thick, long towels and two full-length mirrors. The bed sat on a marble platform and was decorated with a multicolored spread. The closets were filled with casual clothes, clean underwear and several pairs of new, unused sandals and boots.

He spent the rest of the evening scrubbing himself in the shower, trimming his beard, brushing the moss off his teeth, snipping his long nose hairs and his gnarled toenails. Marisa brought him a tray of sandwiches and beer. After he ate, he sprayed himself with cologne, dressed in a pair of white slacks and a colorful pullover jersey. The next morning he joined Diego Rivera and Dona Elena under an umbrella on the deck where they usually met sunrise and sunset to begin and end their days.

That night the three of them sat in silence watching the pearl of the moon brighten in the sky. If Dona Elena seemed not the least curious about Juan Garcia and said nothing.

The next morning before driving to the university for his first lecture of the week Diego Rivera stopped by his study to pick up some papers. Dona Elena always slept late and it was his custom to breakfast alone on another smaller deck that faced the sunrise and sat atop a cliff that dropped straight down to the ocean. The hefty cook, Paolo, too real to miss, served him in a timely manner with hot oatmeal and sunny-side-up eggs. He read the newspaper, savoring each item that reported international affairs and then went to his study to load up his briefcase.

He was somewhat shocked to see Juan Garcia already seated at his desk savoring a cigar. A food tray with leftover bits of toast, congealed egg and the husk of half a grapefruit lay on top

of his leather-edged blotter. Juan Garcia propped his bare feet on an opened drawer and kept flicking the ashes of prized cigar on the carpet after each puff.

“I can see the source of your problems, friend,” Juan Garcia said, flicking his fingers towards several volumes of leather-bound books stacked before him. “I rose early eager to repay your hospitality, excited by the challenge of your dilemma. I browsed several of these...these compendiums of knowledge, looking for some clue, some hint of where you might go next. I’m sorry to report neither do I want to diminish your years of study nor to discourage your further efforts but this may be a simple case that you are right after all. You have wasted an entire lifetime on nothing. You see, what you have been reading, these so-called ideas, they are bullshit, complete and worthless bullshit. The authors have never built a bridge, saved a life, fed a mouth, never fully satisfied a woman. No, you may want to begin again somehow.”

Diego Rivera felt his skin heat up. He had not expected Juan Garcia to move so quickly into the critic’s role. Last night as they had talked, looking out at the stars, Juan Garcia had seemed thankful for his new opportunity. The lean wasted wayfarer had felt consoling.

“The nice thing about philosophy,” Diego Rivera responded, holding back his ire, “is that there is much room for diversity.”

“I don’t know, too much room maybe,” Juan Garcia mused. “In my trade, it’s best to stick to a certain code, draw a line on a map and stick a pin into it.”

“You may be right in the end,” Diego Rivera conceded, “but for now I must bid you good day. I will be tossing around this subject and others with my sleepy students.”

Juan Garcia waved him away with a contented smile.

And so went the tenure of his guest at the villa. The student of the world and scholar of the road talked late into the night with Diego Rivera over his finest brandies. So many conversations were these that his stock began to shrink alarmingly. Old Christoph and Paola could be heard chatting about Juan Garcia and his siestas with Marisa, the maid. Meanwhile, Diego Rivera’s usually calm sleep turned restive and he would awaken in the middle of the night to the crashing of the waves, though formerly they soothed him, now filled him with fear.

He lost some weight. He didn't mind. He needed to lose weight. But he lost it in the wrong places, from his face, from his arms and legs. At the same time, Juan Garcia, who had also depleted his supply of imported cigars, took on weight, so that his face blossomed in a fine way. His stature straightened, his gait became solid and sure. He began doing odd jobs for Dona Elena, fixing a broken jalousie, building a new compartment for trash and garbage. He recommended changes in furniture, new arrangements that at first seemed bold and asymmetrical but, after a second appraisal, made a room stimulating and sparkling to the eye.

Diego Rivera welcomed these changes. He no longer spent every afternoon in his study. How could he? Juan Garcia's orange peelings were piled high on his desk. His coffee cups left rings on a leather-bound copy of Plutarch. Ashtrays with cigar stubs were scattered on table tops. On plans to redesign the great room. Ideas for a pool around the fountain. For gold fish. For oriental motifs. Scrolls of ideas on top of scrolls.

He spent more time in the sun. With his fitful nights and loss of weight, he needed color. He didn't feel the need to trim his beard every day and left it looking askew.

Dona Elena did not seem to mind. She was engrossed in constant conversation with their new house guest. They discussed international events, movements in drama and art, the need to educate the masses. There wasn't anything Juan Garcia hadn't done or anyplace he hadn't been. The three of them developed the habit of swimming nude together every evening before dinner. Juan Garcia often came to dinner in something borrowed from Diego Rivera's wardrobe.

Old Christoph worked quietly during all this, shaking his head and tut-tutting over the change that was transforming the household. He'd listen to Juan Garcia charming Dona Elena and noticed the waning of Diego Rivera cowering with desperate eyes at one end of the table.

Was there anything the lean, wasted wayfarer had not done, anything he had not seen, anyone he not known, or a cousin of a cousin, any situation he had not been in? Old Christoph wanted to hide out of embarrassment. Episodes with foreign agents. Stalked by a dictator's secret police. Finally, abandoned by his principals, here on the road to town, hungry, thirsty, ill-kempt, the result of the misadventures of a minor official of a Caribbean country who longed to build an inventory of modern weapons. Ah, it had been treacherous for sure, motorboat chases in the dark of the night on the open seas, hand-to-hand combat with machetes and pistols, and days without

food. The rewards? Ready cash. Tough-minded women who could chew up men faster than a monkey could climb a vine. Being on the inside of things.

All of these happenings, Diego Rivera may have imagined, the making of an evening's entertainment. But nothing, to his way of thinking, to match the musings of Kant or Nietzsche. He couldn't understand what kept Dona Elena so enthralled.

Juan Garcia engaged Dona Elena in other ways. While Diego Rivera argued with his students, Dona Elena and her new-found friend decided it was time to redecorate the villa. The heavy Mediterranean style of furniture was upstaged by oriental settees, bright contemporary chairs, kidney-shaped glass tables, tall, thin lamps that flashed the light up to the ceiling rather than over your shoulder. Juan Garcia fancied himself a decorator. He liked bold, bright colors. The rust-colored cushions were replaced with rose, pink, green, jet black and gold. The stately armoire in the entrance was crammed into Diego Rivera's study to make space for a cinnabar-colored table arranged with ceramic vases.

Paola could no longer count on throwing a roast in a pot and calling it dinner. Juan Garcia prepared a grocery list each morning and sent him into town to gather the ingredients for the evening meal. In place of heavy meats and gravies, there were dishes of long noodles tossed with cheese and spices; rich red sauces that titillated the tongue and mouth; crunchy salads and steaming fish.

"I'm not too eager for a fish," Diego Rivera grumbled as Marisa served his platter. "In the evening, a man is hungry for some red meat and a glass of port."

"So dull," Dona Elena snapped, cocking her head and winking at Juan Garcia.

Diego Rivera picked at his vegetables and noticed how different she looked. Apparently, Juan Garcia had taken the time to redecorate her too. She hadn't worn a long dress with a comb in her hair for some time now. She showed her legs and her cleavage. Her modest swim suit hung on the hook. She must have had four or five new bikinis. Worst of all, in Diego Rivera's mind, her face looked incredibly youthful. The frown lines on her forehead had disappeared, her eyes sparkled like the diamonds on top of the sea. And look at Juan Garcia how he thrived! His hair was combed back on the sides, the trenches under his eyes had been filled with food and

rest. The leathered skin had softened into a tanned, rugged jaw and his mouth grinned often to show strong, white teeth.

This is not working out as I had wished, Diego Rivera thought, stirring the sauce on his plate. I should have a talk with our guest.

“Let’s share a cigar in my study,” Diego Rivera suggested in a raspy voice.

Juan Garcia looked over at Dona Elena.

“OK,” she said, “but don’t spend all night. Juan and I have some fabrics to look over. Besides, it will be a beautiful evening.”

Diego Rivera felt his skin burn. But he didn’t have the energy to protest. After Marisa and Paolo cleared the dishes and they had their coffee, he retired to his bathroom to rinse his hands and clean his teeth. So old looking, he groused at himself in the mirror.

When he arrived at his study, Juan Garcia was already sitting in his leather chair, puffing a long cigar. Diego Rivera repressed the urge to grab him by the collar and throw him out. He searched the room for some place to sit. He brushed a pile of magazines off an ottoman and sat dejectedly, raising his head to make eye contact with Juan Garcia.

“My friend,” Diego Rivera said, “I am happy for you. You have regained your health and you have been an interesting guest. I had hoped, though, that you and I would have more opportunities to visit, more time to discuss manly things. I see that you have busied yourself with Dona Elena and the household. That was fine. Maybe the household needed some tending to. But now I find myself something of a stranger in my own home. I think it may be time for you to move on. This is hard for me to say.”

Juan Garcia continued to stare out the window, puffing and flicking, a sharp, little smile set on his lips.

“Ah, my fine host, I don’t know quite how to say it, but you will have me here for a long time to come. You see, once you let me in the door and allowed me to fill the empty spaces in your home, you conceded your domain. I think you are powerless but to allow me to stay. Keep your ears and eyes open. You may learn a thing or two.”

“You piece of shit,” Diego Rivera blurted out, pointing an unsteady finger at the intruder sitting at his desk. “Out. I want you out, and now!”

“But what you want and what you can accomplish may be two different things. I suggest you are tired. You have a class tomorrow to prepare for. And I.... I have an appointment with Dona Elena.” Juan Garcia rose, leaving Diego Rivera to stare down between his feet. Yes, he was tired, very tired.

Diego Rivera woke suddenly in the middle of the night. He had heard a sound, many sounds, familiar, but sounds he had not heard for a long time. He turned to one side, reaching for Dona Elena but she was not there. The sounds increased, a commotion. Diego Rivera slowly pushed himself upright, sat on the edge of the bed to gain his bearings. He stubbed his toe on the bed stand searching for a pair of shorts to pull on. Finally, he stumbled down the hallway, scrawny in his nakedness.

Old Christoph must have heard the racket too. Diego Rivera could see him through a window. He wore a pair of long johns and his white, wispy hair blew in the breeze. He inched out into the courtyard, looking confused, scratching himself between the legs and running his eyes right and left, up and down.

Diego Rivera saw a dim light. Partly awake, he ascertained that it came from Juan Garcia’s room. So did the whispers, the groaning sounds.

“What? Now this too,” Diego Rivera shrieked as he burst through the door, surprisingly Juan Garcia about to mount Dona Elena with his long thick instrument.

Juan Garcia knelt upright and spread his arms as if to say, “What the hell!” Dona Elena lay with her legs lifted and wide open, panting and whimpering, “Hurry, hurry.” She rubbed her breasts with her own hands, her nipples stood an inch high.

“You ungrateful bastard, and you, you whore. Out of here, out of here immediately,” Diego Rivera bawled.

“Take it easy, friend,” Juan Garcia replied, still kneeling.

“Friend, my ass,” Diego River shouted, shaking his bony fist.

“Hurry, hurry,” Dona Elena pleaded.

Diego Rivera approached the bed, but Juan Garcia held up an opened hand to stop him.

“Take it easy. Let us finish. You might learn something here. You might learn how a real man makes love.”

Diego Rivera started to renew his protest but felt helpless to intervene. Juan Garcia now had the physique of a well-trained athlete and a grimace that made him shiver. He sat back on a chair by the bed, hands on his knees, starting ahead.

He never remembered seeing Dona Elena behaving like this, wailing, moaning, beating Juan Garcia on the back with her fists, clawing like a wild animal at his skin. With him, it was always “touch me here”, “touch me there”, no this, no that, a little “ooo” here, a little “aaah” there, but no screaming and flailing as could now be seen before him. He felt his own excitement rise and dug his nails into his skin.

“No,” he shouted involuntarily as the couple approached the crest of their wave, “No, I can’t stand this to happen.”

“Leave us, you fool,” Dona Elena barked angrily.

Diego Rivera stood on his thin, wobbly legs, dashing down the hall as best he could. He found himself beating on Marisa’s door.

“Take me in, child,” he yelled. “Take me in.”

A sleepy Marisa opened the door and beheld the agonized face of her master. She was a friendly Dutch girl who never harmed a soul, but she felt afraid. Diego Rivera forced his way into the room.

“I just need to be with someone,” he moaned and he led her back to her bed and curled himself around her, mewling like an orphaned cat.

She stroked the back of his neck until he fell asleep.

Old Christoph saw what happened the next morning. He had packed his clothes, deciding it was time to move to another villa. This place had become too crazy. He was straightening his rakes and hoes and shovels into a neat line when the screaming erupted again. This time Diego

Rivera and Juan Garcia wrestled into the courtyard like two madmen. Diego Rivera had a platinum coated pistol in his hand and Juan Garcia squeezed his wrist to keep the barrel away from his head. As thin and insubstantial as he was, Diego Rivera seemed to find new strength each time Juan Garcia rolled over on top of him. Both men screamed and growled and tore at each other's clothes. Two lions, Old Christoph thought.

But Juan Garcia rolled over and slapped the pistol onto the courtyard tile. "Enough, you fool, enough," he said between breaths, banging Diego Rivera's head over and over again. Finally, Diego Rivera gave in, lay flat and still. Juan Garcia crawled to where the pistol lay, grabbed it and pointed it at Diego Rivera, who floundered like a dying fish.

Juan Garcia stood for a moment regaining his composure. He wobbled over to a table, flopped down on the bench next to it and lay the pistol down. His shoulders were heaving and he wiped his sweat on his shirt sleeve. He ran his shaky fingers back through his hair to push it out of his eyes.

"OK, you worthless piece of shit. Now get your sorry ass up off the ground and get the hell out of here," Juan Garcia ordered, motioning at the wrought iron gate he had first entered into the villa.

"Out, I said. Out," he kept repeating.

Diego Rivera lay still for a long time. Looking up, he could see Dona Elena's face peering at him through the jalousies of her bedroom window. It was not a look of compassion or a look of fear. It was a look of cruel scorn.

He pushed himself up first on one elbow, then the other. Then one knee, then the other. Like some old dog with mange, Old Christoph thought. He crawled to the fountain, laid his face against it, one hand over the lip, then the other, eventually pulling himself upright, falling backwards, forward.

"Out, you dishonored species of slime," Juan Garcia mocked, lighting a cigar he pulled out of one of Diego Rivera's most expensive boots. He puffed it as Diego Rivera zigzagged on weak legs toward the gate.

The gate was already slightly ajar. Diego Rivera slipped through the opening and turned to make a face.

“Out, before I snuff you out completely,” Juan Garcia commanded. Diego Rivera glared back at him but continued his departure when he saw Juan Garcia lift the barrel of the pistol.

“And close the gate behind you, you fucking pip-squeak. Close it,” Juan Garcia yelled, knocking an inch of ash off his cigar.

“You asked to be treated like an old dog. Besides,” he sniffed, drawing long and deep on the cigar and exhaling in a rush, “all of this was actually my idea in the first place. You did not invent me. I invented myself. You have become a spirit left to disappear in the dust along the road.”

Juan Garcia couldn't stop laughing. Dona Elena stepped outside and laughed along with him.

"Fool," she shouted in the direction of the departing Diego Rivera. "This is the new world."