

## Love & Conqueror WEDDED AT LAST.

### CHAPTER I.

He placed chairs for them, then left them alone in his pleasant sitting room. It was a cheerful room, handsomely furnished, and the windows looked over a garden which in the summer was bright and fragrant with the beauty and the smell of flowers. Lady Oliphant and Guy exchanged a few sentences as they waited, Shirley sat by the window, looking out with wistful eyes and pale parted lips. Something in the place seemed to stifle her; even in that cheerful airy room she could scarcely breathe; and Guy, without speaking, opened the window near which she sat. Her eyes glanced up at him gratefully, and then she looked out again at the dreary garden.

Presently the door opened, and a pretty golden-haired little girl came bounding in, but stopped shyly, seeing the strange ladies. Guy bent down to her and took her little hand in his. She was a daughter of Captain Graham's, whose acquaintance he had made the night before.

"Don't go away, Amy," he said smiling. "Come and speak to these ladies. Did you want your father?"

"Yes," she whispered shyly, shaking her curls over her face as she left her hand in his; and Shirley turned from the window at sound of the sweet childish voice, and the stifled sensation at her heart left her as she saw the shy bright blue eyes looking at her wistfully from beneath the veil of falling yellow hair.

"Whose little girl are you?" she said softly; and the child crossed the room and put her chubby little fingers on Shirley's soft sealakin.

"Father's," she answered brightly. "And mother's?"

"Yes; but mother has gone away, you know; the angels came and fetched her."

"Did they, darling?" Shirley's fingers were parting the way golden hair from the pure white brow, and her eyes, very intent and tender, were studying the child's face.

"I was sorry," the child went on, "because no one ever kissed the place and made it better, when I fell down, as she did; but father was very sorry; and the bright face shadowed a little at the remembrance."

"And you were his little comfort?"

"Yes. Who told you so—did father? He always called me that."

Shirley lifted her on to her knee, and pressed her quivering lips to the pretty hair; and the little girl, with all a child's quick instinct and pity for any one suffering, put up her arm and clasped Shirley's neck and nestled her golden head against the soft sealakin of Shirley's coat; and there was inexpressible comfort in the tight clasp and the clinging little hand.

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It seemed to Shirley, as she sat there, with Amy Graham nestling in her arms, that much of the darkness which had fallen upon her spirit as she entered the castle had been lifted since the child had entered the room. That anything so good, so bright, so innocent should have lived in that gloomy place was sufficient to remove half its gloom; and Amy never guessed what a little comforter it truth she had been to the beautiful lady who clasped her so tenderly and so closely.

"You live here always, Amy?"

"Yes, always; but sometimes we go away together to the seaside, father and me and nurse."

"Do you like the seaside, my dear?"

"Yes; but I like the castle best."

"You have no little brother or sister?" Shirley asked softly.

"No"—the child shook her head as it rested against Shirley, and the blue eyes grew very wistful—"I had a little brother once, but he went with mother to heaven."

"Captain Graham has seen great trouble," Lady Oliphant said, in a low voice. "He lost his young wife and little son within a few days of each other."

Shirley looked up wistfully; she was thinking perhaps that "what is more for the living lost than ever it is for the dead;" but she remained silent; and in a few moments Captain Graham came back, his stern face softening into a beautiful tenderness as he caught sight of the child in Lady Glynn's arms and saw the more peaceful look in the beautiful hazel eyes which met his with sudden swift inquiry.

"Sir Hugh can see you now," he said quietly. "Have you been making friends with my daughter, Lady Glynn? She is generally a little addicted to shyness."

She was not afraid of me," Shirley said, as she put the child down—and Captain Graham noticed how long and close and fond the kiss was which she pressed upon the rosy cheek—and then she followed the governor out of the room.

He led her himself down the long passages and stone steps, thinking meanwhile that it was rare for the gloomy prison to receive such a beautiful visitant, and himself, too, opened the door of the cell, where Sir Hugh was confined.

"I will take care that you are not disturbed," he said, very gently. "And, Lady Glynn, I need hardly tell you that he is weary and that—"

"I will not forget," she said, steadily. "I will not be less calm than I am now. Thank you, Captain Graham."

She went in softly; he closed the door after her, and Shirley was in the prison-cell with which her dreams had been haunted more than once.

It was a bare, whitewashed room, scrupulously clean, and through the high barred window a ray of wintry sunshine had struggled in and lay softly on the floor, while in the little grate a fire was burning cheerily. Sir Hugh was fully dressed, lying upon the bed with closed eyes, and he looked so haggard and attenuated and death-like that Shirley's heart almost ceased to beat with a sudden fear. Her noiseless movements, the soft unrustling velvet dress that she wore did not attract his attention, and she was fully a minute in the room, watching him, before he saw her.

Her thoughts went back almost involuntarily to the days when she had known him first and she saw him again as he had been then, so handsome and distinguished, so full of life and health and gaiety; she remembered the New Year's Eve ball at

Partholme Court and their interview in the schoolroom, which had been the beginning of such misery, and it almost seemed as if she could hear again the patter of the rain against the window pane as she had heard it then, and the moan of the wind in the leafless trees. And it was his love for her which had brought him to this grievous strait, the impulse of an undisciplined heart, which, having always received "good," could not bear to resist "evil."

The heavy lids were slowly lifted, and his eyes opened and he saw her, and over his face came a sudden brightness which gave it for a moment some of the beauty of other days. The next minute she was kneeling beside him, and his weak arms were around her, his face hidden where Amy's golden head had rested a few minutes before, and there was silence.

It was Shirley who, remembering Captain Graham's injunction, moved first. She disengaged herself gently from his weak clasp, and put him back upon the pillows, and his eyes dwelt upon her with all the old passionate tenderness as she bent over him.

"So you have come to me, Shirley?" he said at last, while his eyes drank in the beauty of her face and his hands clasped hers closely.

"You expected me, Hugh? You knew I would come?"

"Yes; but—"

"But what, dear?"

"But I was almost sorry afterward that I had asked for you. This is no place for you, love."

"It is the fittest place, Hugh; and as often and as long as I can I will be with you."

He smiled feebly.

"How pleasant it is to hear you speak in that little tone of decision!" he said. "It is very pleasant too to see you in that dress, Shirley."

He touched her velvet and fur with his slender fingers for a moment; and she smiled bravely into his altered face.

"I am glad," she said brightly. "But tell me of yourself, Hugh."

"Of myself, dear," he echoed. "There is not much to tell, save that I am happier, much more at rest, than I have been during all these long months."

She stooped toward him and put her lips to his forehead.

"And you are not suffering much, Hugh?"

"No—hardly at all. And I am much stronger. Captain Graham sent me that arm-chair, Shirley; and it is only sheer laziness which makes me lie here."

He rose as he spoke, and, staggering to his feet, managed with Shirley's aid to reach the arm-chair, where he lay back exhausted even by that effort.

"I can see you better here," he said presently, smiling at her with his pale lips quivering a little and his eyes very dim. "And I want to see as much of you as I can, my brave generous darling. I seem to have so much to say to you, Shirley, and—and not very much time to say it in."

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crime, the sight of the horror and repugnance in your eyes would kill me; but, when you knew it, and Guy, it seemed as if I did not care who else saw my shame. And they were all very good and patient. Shirley, although poor Guy was terribly cut up because they would not take bail.

"We were grieved at that, Hugh."

"Were you, my darling?" he said wistfully. "I think it is almost better so. I have been such a burden to you these last few weeks that—"

She raised her hand to his mouth to silence him, and he caught it and pressed it fondly to his lips.

"It is better so, Shirley," he said again. "I cannot help feeling what misery I should have saved you and Guy if I had been honest and brave enough to do what was right at first. But regrets are unavailing and useless—besides, it is too late for any atonement now."

They were silent for a space then, the eyes of both resting on the red glow of the fire, and Hugh's faint struggling breathing, alone breaking the silence.

"Guy has been so good to me," he went on softly. "I have no words to speak of his goodness. I think the very sight of him puts life into me, Shirley. My darling, it takes so much of the pain away to think that I leave you in his care."

Weeping now, she leant her head against his arm, and asked him tremulously and brokenly through her tears not to speak to her thus, not to talk of leaving her, there might be happiness for them yet!

(To be continued.)

### Mother! If Child's Tongue Is Coated

If cross, feverish, constipated, bilious, stomach sour, give "California Syrup of Figs."

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Look at the tongue, mother! If coated, or your child is listless, cross, feverish, breath bad, restless, doesn't eat heartily, full of cold or has sore throat, or any other children's ailment, give a teaspoonful of "California Syrup of Figs," then don't worry, because it is perfectly harmless, and in a few hours all this constipation, sour bile and fermenting waste will gently move out of the bowels, and you have a well, playful child again. A thorough "inside cleansing" is oftentimes all that is necessary. It should be the first treatment given in any sickness.

Beware of counterfeit fig syrups. Ask your druggist for a 50-cent bottle of "California Syrup of Figs," which has full directions for babies, children of all ages and for grown-ups plainly printed on the bottle. Look carefully and see that it is made by the "California Fig Syrup Company." Don't be fooled!

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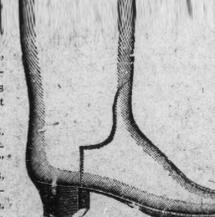
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