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BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE AUSTRALIAN DUKE; OR, THE NEW UTOPIA," ETC.

CHAPTER XII. THE SEVENTH CARTOON.

The visit to Madame de St. Briere and her daughter was accomplished with all propriety; and, when it was over, Julian, as he had said, lost no time in returning to his brushes.

This state of things continued for about a week, at the end of which time he called Geoffrey into his painting-room. There, on an easel, was the result of his labors, a marvellous design, which Geoffrey found little difficulty in recognizing as a reproduction of the vision of Uriel.

The golden tints of beaming sunny rays Circling his head.

and forming its only aureola. An exclamation of wonder and delight broke from Geoffrey's lips.

Mary was called, and at the first glance could only cry out, "St. Uriel! O, Geoffrey, how beautiful! There is the light and the fire and the strength you see it has come at last," she continued, turning to Julian: "but when she looked at him there was an expression on his countenance that almost terrified her; it was as though the mortal powers had been brought face to face with an Immortal.

He saw her look of questioning and anxiety, and attempted to laugh. "I have been trying to paint with the sunbeams, as you told me," he said, "and you see the blaze has bewildered my faculties. But you think it will do?"

"Do?" said Mary. "I wish I could tell you what I think about it. The odd thing is, that though it startled me with its supernatural look, there is something about it which seems familiar, as though I had seen that face in a dream."

Geoffrey had felt the same kind of half recognition, but the explanation seemed to him easy enough. Julian had been painting out of the image in his heart, and had conveyed to his canvas a reflection of Aurelia's features. It was not precisely a portrait, and yet in look and expression the artist had certainly thrown something of that majestic calm which stamped Aurelia's beauty with its unearthly character.

But Geoffrey did not feel at that moment disposed to suggest this explanation to his sister; though possibly it connected itself in some way or other with a heavy sigh which she heard just then beside her.

The other members of the family were now summoned, and united in congratulating Mr. Wyvern on his success; but Mary could not be satisfied till Aurelia and Father Segrave had been summoned to examine the completion of the cartoon in which they had both taken so special an interest. So a note was despatched to the castle begging for their appearance without delay, and an hour later Aurelia descended from her carriage. She found Mary lying in wait for her in the hall, ready to carry her on to the waiting room, in company with the chaplain.

They entered the apartment, and the easel supporting the picture stood exposed before their eyes. Aurelia looked at it for one moment; but what was the surprise, to those who stood around when she gave a cry of anguish, and covered her face with her hands as though she could not, dared not, look again.

Mary stood as one stupefied. "Dear Aurelia," she said, passing her arm around her friend, "what is it—what is amiss?"

Aurelia lifted her head and pointed to the cartoon. "It is himself," she said; "it is Uriel." Then turning to Julian: "Where have you seen him to paint him thus?"

"I have, indeed, painted only what I have seen," said Julian. "Then you have seen my lost brother," said Aurelia. "Is it possible that he can yet be living?"

"God's ways are wonderful," said Geoffrey, gravely, leading her to a chair. "Sit down, Aurelia, and hear what Julian has to say, for you must tell it to her, as you did to me. Perhaps there is something in it."

Julian told his tale, and Aurelia listened with her eyes fixed on the picture in which the young man had depicted the form and features of his mysterious deliverer.

"If he whom you saw resembled that picture," she said, "he must have been the living counterpart of my poor brother. Nay, who can say: may it not have been Aurelia?"

"But dear herself," said Mary, "how could that be? You know, we all know, the sad end which shut out all hope?"

"Shut out all hope, do you say?" said Aurelia; "I have never given up hope, never. When I have prayed for him as dead, something in my heart has always told me that he might be living still."

"And you, Mr. Wyvern, how do you explain this strange affair?" said the chaplain, who seemed desirous of discouraging Aurelia from indulging in so hopeless a delusion. "You have heard what Miss Pendragon says, and I confess the likeness is startling, though surely nothing more than accidental."

Julian shook his head. "I will say it here," he replied, "though I would not care to say it to the world outside; I do not believe the form I saw was that of mortal man. I believe it was an angel—his angel, perhaps—that took his form, or it may be his patron, St. Uriel."

There was a pause, which Geoffrey was the first to break. "I am no judge of these things," he said, "visions and pictures, and so forth; but it seems to me there is an easy way of coming at the truth. The crew of the 'Speranza' ought to know whom they had with them that night."

"No," said Julian, "there is nothing to be learned from them. I went to Penmore and saw them all, with the exception of one fellow, a French fisherman, whose boat was in the bay at the time, having been driven in for shelter in the storm, and who had volunteered to join them. He left next day, so I did not see him—but that," he continued, indicating the picture by a nod of the head, "that was no St. Malo fisherman."

"You think so," said Father Adrian, "because your feelings just then were highly wrought, and you saw everything through their medium. But the only probable solution of this mystery seems to me to lie in the supposition that you saw in your deliverer, and have again reproduced on your canvas, the reflection of your own meditations, which have not unnaturally been mingled of late with recollections of these old portraits of the Pendragons, where the family likeness is so singularly perpetuated. Ah, yes, I see, you think it a cold-blooded sort of explanation, but I have learned to know what strange tricks our imaginations will play us."

"I quarrel with no one for being incredulous of my word," said Julian; "for I have found it hard to trust my own impressions. I attempt no explanation, only this is certain: what I saw I have painted."

Aurelia looked at him with streaming eyes. "Oh, that I had seen it too," she said; "those Seven Spirits! how often I have longed to see them in their beauty! And why may we not believe that it was one of them? an angel, surely—his angel, perhaps, who took his form, to tell us that he still keeps guard over his client!"

It was seldom that Aurelia spoke thus, and Mary, who saw that her friend had been powerfully moved, proposed to accompany her back to the castle, hoping that her feelings, pent up in the presence of others, might find relief when they were alone with one another.

So they departed together; but for some reason Father Segrave did not accompany them. He saw them off, and then returned to the room where Geoffrey and Julian still remained.

"I hope I am not intruding on your time too long," he said; "but I want to hear more of that French fisherman."

"Oh, I can tell you nothing about him," replied Julian; "the Penmore fellows said he was from St. Malo, and I did not give it another thought. What is in your mind? You do not really think there is any ground for Miss Pendragon's fancy about her brother being still alive?"

"I don't know what to think," said Father Segrave. "It is, as you say, a mere fancy, and a most improbable one. But, poor child, her heart has always yearned over that unfortunate brother, whose guilt she never believed, and whose reputation, I believe, she would die to clear before the world."

"Did you yourself believe him guilty?" said Julian. "I have never been able to get Geoffrey here to give an opinion beyond this, that there was much to be said on both sides."

"I suppose I am scarcely an impartial judge," said Father Segrave, "for I knew and loved the lad from a youth, and never knew him to do a dishonorable thing; though I sometimes thought that in this, perhaps, there was less the fear of God than the scorn of disgracing the name of Pendragon. If so, he has paid a sad penalty for his pride, for through him the family has been dishonored before the whole world. The case was briefly this: he had joined his regiment about a year, when the news came of a strange business which had taken place in the barracks where he was stationed. One of the officers, a Captain Redmond, was found in his room, as it seemed mortally wounded by a pistol shot. The account he gave was not very intelligible, but he swore to some one having entered his room at night for the purpose of robbery. Awakening suddenly, he had seen in the dim light a figure of unusual height, and springing from his bed to grapple with the intruder, was shot down, and found lying senseless. When the place was examined it was discovered that the robber, whoever he might have been, had made off with a considerable sum of money, some in cash and some in notes. Every room in the barracks was searched, and some of the notes were found in Uriel's desk, though he solemnly declared they must have been put there without his knowledge. I think this was the main evidence against him, and the circumstance of

the robber being sworn to as of gigantic size, for Uriel was considerably above the ordinary height. Had Redmond died the poor fellow's life would have been forfeited; as it was, his youth was put forth as a plea for mercy, and he escaped with five years of penal servitude, which, to one of his nature, must have been a living death. I will honestly confess the evidence against him never seemed to me sufficient. It was entirely circumstantial, and many important links were missing. The notes might, as he never had placed in his desk by the real criminal; and Redmond made no attempt to identify the person of his assailant. He spoke of his great height, and among the privates of the regiment there was one, equally tall with Uriel, who was known to bear a grudge against him. Then again it was suggested that secret debts must have been the motive of the crime; but after Uriel had been sent to Portland inquiries were set on foot with the view of liquidating any claims against him, but none were brought forward; so that there is nothing to account for a youth in his position having been led to such a crime."

"And what view did his father take of the business?" said Julian—"because with such a poor show of evidence one would expect some effort would have been made."

"I fear," replied the chaplain, "that the sense of crushing disgrace predominated over every other feeling with Sir Michael; it all turned his head, and he swore, so long as this cloud rested on his house never again to touch aught but Lenten food, never to pass the boundary of his own enclosure, and never to give consent to his daughter's marriage, that he might not carry into any other family the stain of their terrible dishonor."

"How monstrous!" said Julian, starting to his feet; "he might have sworn what he liked for himself, but what right had he to dispose of his daughter's freedom?"

"None in the least," said Father Segrave; "nor do I consider that her freedom is in any way so bound. But if you knew the Pendragons better, you would understand the old man's extravagance, overstrained as it is."

"I never heard that part of it before," growled Geoffrey; "very like Jephthah's daughter, I should say. And how did Aurelia take it?"

"Well, you know her," said Father Segrave; "she would never oppose her father's will; and, to say the truth, I don't think she concerns herself much on the subject. Marmaduke Pendragon once tried to bring about an alliance with his eldest son, but she if her father's consent could have been obtained. The conclusion to which his stern resolve has for years condemned her has separated her from the ordinary thoughts and aspirations of girls of her age, who mix with the world. She lives apart, in a world, and with aspirations of her own."

Julian remained silent, as one in deep thought, "So long as the cloud rests on his house, you say; if those are the terms of his oath it would imply that these preposterous restrictions would to an end if the cloud were removed?"

"Of course," replied the chaplain. "Then there is only one thing that can do that," continued Julian, "to find Uriel, if, indeed, he be living, and clear him in the eyes of the world. Now, honestly, do you think there is a shadow of possibility that he still survives?"

"You may judge for yourself," said the chaplain. "We know positively that on the voyage to America he fell over the side of the vessel, towards evening, when it was growing dark. They threw over life-buoys, and lowered a boat, but the darkness came on, and they could do no more; and nothing further was seen or heard of him from that hour. I own I do not see what reasonable ground there can be for indulging a hope in such a case."

"Well," said Julian, "there is no more to be said; only mark this, if he is yet alive, we will find him."

The chaplain looked at him, half-pleased and half-perplexed. "Ah, well, Mr. Wyvern," he said, "you are of the age of ardent hopes and generous enterprises. May God give you success in what you undertake, and may the holy angels lend their aid!"

"Amen," said Julian, gravely. "Believe me, it is not for nothing that their old sanctuary is being restored. Two months ago, I believe, my notions about the angels did not greatly differ from those avowed by Paxton; but my work for Merylin chapel has taught me many things; and when I stood on the wreck the other night, it was from the bottom of my heart that I invoked their aid."

"And your prayer was heard," said the chaplain; "whoever your deliverer was, the fact remains that you were delivered, and to God and His holy angels be the praise!"

CHAPTER XIII. AN EXHIBITION. As the excitement caused by the first appearance of Julian's cartoon began to subside most parties satisfied themselves that there was nothing in it but "a singular coincidence," and if any among them still clung to the belief that there was a deeper significance in the incident, either natural or supernatural, they were prudent enough to say nothing more on the subject.

Julian himself did not recur to it, but a certain change was apparent in him which did not escape the notice of his friend. There was a gravity and thoughtfulness in his demeanor which

to Geoffrey's thinking had its explanation in the facts which had lately come to their knowledge as to the singular position in which Aurelia was placed by her father's vow.

"I see it all," said Geoffrey to himself, "he feels that as things are it is useless for him to aspire to her hand; ah, well, it makes no odds to me. It is not more impossible for me to think of her now than it has ever been. But I am sorry for Julian."

Then it occurred to him to ask himself how it might be with Aurelia herself? If, as he had every reason for thinking, she had allowed Julian to gain an interest in her heart, the only way of removing the bar to her happiness was the vindication of Uriel's memory. "If he is dead, he is dead," thought Geoffrey, "and all the wishing in the world will not bring him to life again. But, if he were innocent, his innocence might yet be proved, and then—"

What then, good Geoffrey? What thought is it which expands his breast and illumines his eye, as though a noble purpose was rising in his heart, a purpose high enough and hard enough to make his life heroic? for no truer word was ever spoken than that which proclaimed that in every man living in this world who is ready, "not to sell his life, but to give it, there exists the potentiality of a hero." It was the conviction, perhaps, that something more was being offered to his acceptance at that moment than the conscientious discharge of common duties. Not a bad thing either, and by no means too common; yet admitting of something higher, perhaps even leading the way thereto, as we ascend by gentle slopes, until a height is reached whence through scarped rocks and eternal snows we push our way to the summit.

"So the cartoons are all finished," said Geoffrey, as that evening they all gathered round the family hearth. "and we shall lose the delightful interest of hearing day by day that Seathie has got a new wing, or that an additional emblem has been found for Jehudiel."

"Yes," replied Julian, "absolutely finished; and, as a rigid, and to me sorrowful, consequence, the artist has no resource but to pack his portmanteau and be off."

"But not till his work has been exhibited and approved," said Geoffrey; "we have seen them only one by one; now, to judge them properly you should show them to us altogether, and in their proper order. You can't judge of a thing piece-meal."

"That is a good idea," said Julian, "for they are only parts of a whole, and ought to have a sort of harmony connecting them. They shall be set up to-morrow, and if the judges will honor my painting-room—"

"Oh, no, that will never do," said Geoffrey. "If I am to be one of the judges (as I hope you intend), I shall vote for a better exhibition-room than that. Seven angels crowded together in a space of 8 feet by 10, it would be giving them no chance. You should have them in a great gallery, and not too close together."

"As usual, Gerry," said her brother, "your notions are fitter for Swimburne than for Laventor. You must not look for galleries in an old manor-house."

"Well, but why not have them at Merylin, where they will have to go sooner or later?" said Geoffrey; "in the great gallery there we could all see them, and criticise at our ease."

Geoffrey's proposal was agreed to be an inspiration, and Julian declared he would apply the very next morning for Miss Pendragon's consent. It was willingly granted, and the cartoons, carefully mounted, were as carefully conveyed to the castle and fixed at equal distances in the gallery, awaiting the inspection of the judges.

No one was more pleased with this arrangement than Mlle. de St. Briere, as it promised, for one morning, at least, to add an enlivening element to the society of the castle, which, to confess the truth, she found more sad and solemn than was to her taste. She petitioned hard to be nominated assistant to Mr. Wyvern in the important business of hanging his pictures. She invaded Sir Michael in his solitary chamber, and tried to induce him to attend the trial; in short, she who had not been a fortnight in the house succeeded in upsetting its ordinary routine, and carrying out her own plans and arrangements after a fashion that none of the oldest inhabitants of Merylin would have dared to dream of. But on one point "Monsieur Jules" showed himself inflexible—neither she nor any other of the judges should enter the gallery, until all the cartoons were in their places, and the exhibition was declared open. Imogen was forced to submit, assuring Julian, however, that he was the very first person who had ever contradicted her, and that he should certainly be the last.

TO BE CONTINUED.

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Jubilantly chimed out the bells that morning, and the joyful notes were re-echoed in each listening heart, for the long penitential season was over and Easter, with her gladness, her beauty, her promise, had come. Like the all-embracing smile of God, was poured the mellow sunlight over the chill old English town, making a golden frame for the ever-varying scenes its narrow streets presented; while the shrill chirp of the robin and twitter of the sparrow—why dwelling there having light wings to carry them to open fields and leafy solitudes no man knoweth—were Nature's expressions of her great heart rapture. Beyond the city where she dwelt, her thousand choirs sent forth long drawn out notes of gladness, her stately hills bedecked themselves in verdant mantles, crocus brodered, and her vales smiled through violets' eyes joy at their awakening. To the dwellers in the city her rapture is but waking echoes of music heard in dreams; but Easter's voice is still the same. Here it speaks by thrill of bird and flowers blooming; there by silvery notes sent out from lofty steeples.

From almost every point within sound of the alleluia falling from its many pillared belfrey came flocks of worshippers to old St. Mary's shrine there to offer fealty to their Risen King: Fashion, Wealth, and Power, side by side with Misery, Pain and Woe, passed by the marble steps and through the fretted doorway, nor said the lordling to the slave: "Stand thou aside!" for in His court all men are equals. The light from the hundred tapers was for all; the rich perfume of flowers, mingling with the pungent odor of swinging censers, was for all; and for all were the songs borne downward on the organ's pealing.

Where the humblest of these prayed, far back under the gallery's rounded floor, knelt a woman whose garb and mien proclaimed her lowly station, but whose reverent attitude and faith-enlightened eyes told of a soul made rich in the spiritual blessings trials bring.

Ten years had passed since she, then a slip of a peasant girl, whose laughing voice was as sweet as the whistle of a blackbird, whose blue eyes were as clear as the sky over hanging her, had left her father's cot on an Irish hillside, within sound of the sea's continual calling, to face the over-crowded English city in search of a fortune to lift her loved ones from the poverty into which they had fallen. They had been long years of terrible repression and endless toil. She had found the road from the start harsh and painful to feet accustomed to springy, dew-soaked mountain grass, the work strange to fingers used to mending fishing-nets or gathering in the dripping sea-weed. She had eaten of the bread of the stranger and had found it more bitter than Dead Sea fruit. She had sunk her plummet into the world's heart to quickly find a bottom of cruel, exacting selfishness. She had trusted friendship and had been betrayed; she had given her love and it had been slighted. In the unsuspecting innocence of her heart she had confided in humanity only to learn in bitterness and soreness of spirit that if there is no light it cannot see, there is, alas! no depth so vile to which it cannot descend. The world had taught her its lesson well and the knowledge thereby gleaned had shown her that the unquestioning faith of Ireland's children ever deserted her—the fertility and delusion of all hopes centered on the fleeting things of earth.

But now the years of toil were over and she was going home. The next sun to rise for her would be across the purple-tinted hills of Ireland; the next words to greet her hungry ears would be the *caed mille faithe* of her people. The price of her freedom lay in yellow gold in her pocket. True, she had given in exchange her youth and health. True, the ring had gone from the voice, the light from the eyes, and the simplicity and trust she had brought with her lay buried in the cold English town. But even this remembrance could not dampen her joy as over her mind surged the thought of that home-going. She would feel again the moist grass beneath her feet, hear the melody poured from the wild thrush's throat, and look on the ocean's "gray and melancholy waste." How the fisher girl's heart had longed for the sea! How often had she waked in the hush of the early morn with its calling in her ears! Now she could answer its summons. She was at last going back to it and to her people.

It is no wonder that as she knelt on the cold tiling that Easter morning, the great joy in her heart, reproducing itself on the pale, thin face, that still retained signs of its former comeliness, made more than one of her companions look at her in surprised scrutiny. She tried to banish all distracting thoughts, but when her eyes would rest on the distant altar, an exquisite poem wrought out in marble by some artist centuries ago, a picture of the simple wooden shrine before which her childish lips had whispered their earliest prayer would come before her mind and instead of the great mingling of wealth and poverty, she would see the scattered groups of fisher-folk with reverently bowed heads as over them the aged priest pronounced the words of benediction.

With the sudden recalling from a musing mood by the remembrance of where she was, she slightly turned her head; and in doing so her eyes fell on the face of a man near her whose expression, as baffling as it was fascinating, held her captive. His gaze was fixed on the officiating priest with an intensity that was startling. She

qualified before removed her self devotional rosary. In eyes from when she lo the intensity end, the ex become more hated fanned "He is a instinctively the crowd at slightly and hundred the passed her themselves but he was u The tinkling down the isle Never wholly fear calling f face of the m became calm prayful, as s lime act of fa mental Lord turned from horror at the short and t the man t Sacred Host face received priest, and f which he pocket. He and was gon Had the d lost opened Catholic here have been evil she seemed shap act. She kn of the Satan the purpose forced a way in time to church, tur him she fle thought, to r his sacrilege was long an weighed. another wen throbbing h take him b any of the street le on him and "You w as catching on the stone "What o woman?" h lying down o sinister smil "I saw g gasps of br Host!" "Did you what are yo "You mu wailed. "You must!" A mockin soft air as crept into h was powerl she called to thought of money. "Wait!" give it to m "Not for he sneered, figure. "I can g she wailed. "How m She nam pocket, bu again walk "Wait!" more," and savings of look at t at the whit ing woman "This is "Yes!" "You ha amass it?" "For ter Host? W another, as day is over "I can me this O He look and then handed her "You f gold and t mocking la Possesse woman fel and adora traced her rectory. "priest she "But w he asked o "I will she said, and faithfully yore in t But think, by that lo reward? passing a dwelling p years wor to grow, listened to by her sid her child eyes resti of beach, less, foam Beatrice bian. Spring constitu sudden c other ins put the s come as A now.