

CARRIED BY STORM!

By the Author of "Guy Earle's Wife," "A Wonderful Woman," "A Mad Marriage," "Edmond," "O'Donnell," etc.

CHAPTER XIII.—Continued.

Early in December Mr. and Mrs. Livingston return, and parties are given, far and wide, in honor of the bride. And Frank has but one secret in the world from his little wife, and that one is the fact of his brief engagement to Joanna. Somehow he shrinks from telling that it is the one memory sacred to himself and his friend, that even his wife may not know. He feels instinctively that it would give her pain, that Joanna would not wish it, and so he hides it in his heart, as in a grave.

Two days before Christmas, Joanna comes. She finds a rare household assembled at Abbott Wood to meet, and greet, and do her honor. Mrs. Abbott, Mrs. Olg, and Geoffrey, Frank and Leo, of course. But there are others whose presence is a cheering surprise—a surprise over which she laughs and cries together. The Professor and Madame Ericson are there; there, too, is portly Mrs. Gibbs, rich and rare in black silk. There is Thad, quite a slim and genteel young man, a little conceited and over-dressed, but what will you at nineteen? There are the twins, Lonzo and Lizzy. There is Mrs. Hill; and the Reverend Ignatius Lamb; and little Miss Rice. There, in short, is every one Joanna cares most for in the world. Her mother is not with her, the wintry voyage was too much for her, but she is so thoroughly restored she can bear cheerfully to part with her treasure for two or three months.

Oiga looks at her keenly. Yes, Joanna is changed—the change that love, happy love alone works, is in her radiant face. Looking down into Oiga's beautiful, questioning eyes, the quick blush and smile tell their tale. And the sapphiric eyes flash with glad joy, and Oiga's arms clasp her close.

"Oh, Joanna, dearest Joanna, is it indeed so as Lady Hilda says? And you love him, and are happy," she whispers, in a fervent kiss.

"Happy! happy! happy!" is Joanna's reply. "And I love him with all my heart!"

"Such a great, brave, generous heart. Oh, my darling! this only was needed to complete our bliss. And when is it to be?"

"Next June, they tell me," Joanna laughs; "in May, you know, I am to be presented at court by—by his mother. And you and Geoffrey, and Frank and Leo are to come over for the wedding, which is to be a very grand affair indeed. Oiga, I think I am the very happiest and most fortunate woman in all the universe!"

There are tears in the dark earnest eyes, Oiga gives her a last rapturous kiss.

"Not one whit happier than you deserve—you could not be!" is the ultimatum, and like all imperial Oiga's decisions, it stands uncontradicted.

It is New Year's eve. Christmas, with its joy bells, its good cheer, its happy faces, has come and gone, and the old year is dying to-night.

"It brought me a friend, and a true, true love," sings happy Leo, as she lifts about the house. Fires burn, lights flash, warmth, music, feasting are within; darkness, wind, cold, snow are without. The long drawing-rooms are fragrant with flowers, brilliant with lamps, gay with happy faces. There are only the family to-night, no outsiders, but they form a sufficiently large assembly.

Near one of the windows Joanna stands, looking out at the fast-falling snow, listening to the wind "withering" among the trees. She looks a fair and stately woman in her rich black velvet dress—tall, imposing, gracious. Her velvet robe suits the grand curves of her figure—it sweeps in soft, dark folds behind her on the carpet. The fine lace at her throat is caught by one large, gleaming diamond; a knot of forget-me-nots is beneath it, another in her hair.

"You look a queen of noble Nature's crowning," Joanna, "seen Livingston, approaching. I think I point you in that red velvet dress, and these forget-me-nots. Do you know, you have been making a picture of yourself for the last ten minutes, and that I have been lost in artistic admiration."

"And that if it had lasted one millionth part of a second longer I should have been jealous," laughs Leo, coming up; and then there is a momentary pause. Livingston looks conscious. Joanna smiles down at the black-eyed fairy in creamy silk and white roses.

"And do you know what is more to the purpose than empty compliments," says Mrs. Geoffrey Lamar, sailing forward in a cloud, of rose pink, silky shawl, "that you never sit for us now, Lady Hardwicke—that is to be. You have grown very stinky about that lovely voice of yours, since you have been in foreign parts. Come and chant us a New Year's anthem, or an old year's dirge, for it is almost on the witching stroke of twelve."

Joanna goes, and presently her full rich tones ring through the room, but the end of the winter night is hardly sadder, wilder, than the strain she sings:

"Toll, bells, within your airy heights! Wail, wind, o'er your and mere! On this, the saddest of all nights, The last long night, when lambs are ill. Like quaters round a pier: When quiet folk at still hearts sit, And old seems very near."

"The old clock strikes upon the stair, Time's tide is this! And here, and there, and everywhere The New Year's party burn. Strange, dreamy and the street, The first day of the year, The organ sounds the drums are beat, The Old Year's gone for ever!"

"Oh! Joanna, what a melancholy song!" cries little Leo, reproachfully; "and to-night of all nights! You give me the heart-ache. Do sing something less dreary."

"Hark!" says Geoffrey, raising his hand. All the clocks in the house chime out one after another—twelve. The bell in Brighton bursts forth a joyous peal—the New Year has begun. Good wishes go round, they touch glasses in the German fashion, and drink to each other, and eyes look love to eyes that speak again. And once more Joanna touches the keys. This time it is like a jubilant burst of joy:

"Swing bells, a hundred happy ways! Laugh, wind, o'er your and mere! On this the gladdest of all days, The first day of the year, The first sweet day, when every one is cheerful at his heart! The first pure day, when merry sun lights up a merry earth."

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"What a grand creature she is!" Frank Livingston thinks, standing a little apart, looking and listening; "the noblest woman that walks the earth!"

THE COMET OF A SEASON!

By JUSTIN MCCARTHY, M. P.

CHAPTER I.—Continued.

"I didn't mean it that way," she said. What she meant was clear enough. She meant, "We have already been married little more than a year, and are you already discontented with anything?" If she had been in better spirits she would have asked him, "Have you not me? Am not I enough?" But she was not in good spirits; something seemed to oppress her; she was silent for the most part, and occasionally inclined to be keener, for no reason that she could well have explained. Nothing was said for a moment or two, and then she began:

"But you have good prospects, and we are very happy; why should we want anything more—now, at least?"

"It won't always be now," he replied, a little impatiently; "and you don't know, you couldn't know how impatient it makes one when he thinks he is capable of doing something and can't see his way to doing anything. Look here, love: there are times when I begin to think I shall never come to anything. I get it into my head that I have nothing in me—nothing, nothing, nothing at all. Then I feel as if I should like to kill myself. Yes, I do indeed. I am not talking nonsense."

"Then you couldn't be happy, even with me, if you did not have a successful career and show what you could do?"

"No," he said, desperately. "I couldn't be happy; it is no use trying to get over that. I couldn't be happy."

"You don't really care about me; not as I care about you. I could be happy forever with you—anywhere, anyhow."

"It is because I do love you that I couldn't be happy without showing that I was worth the love of a woman like you. You could be happy with me anywhere? Yes; but there is all the difference. You have given up everything for me—your people and all; I have given up nothing; I had nothing to give up. I want to show that I am worth something, and that you were not quite mistaken in throwing yourself away on me. That is why I feel so wild sometimes. What if things go on to the end just like this—"

"Oh, if they only would!" she said.

"Yes, yes, in that way it would be happier, of course, of course; but I mean if they go on to the end without my doing anything to make a name, and your people see that you have married only a commonplace creature, the son of a man who keeps a livery stable—and himself an office clerk—rather than that darling, I hope you will be crying over my grave."

"For shame! I don't believe you love me at all. You are only thinking of yourself, not of me. What do I care whether you make a name or not, or people admire you or not? I married you because I loved you—yourself, and not what any one else—the world or whatever it is—might have seen in you. I saw my happiness in you, I thought; that was enough for me."

"Don't be angry, darling," he said, soothingly, for he was very fond of her. "Things will come all right. I'll make myself something of a name. You shan't be always talked of as the office clerk's wife; the livery-stable keeper's daughter-in-law. I'll make a name. I'll be known in the world; you shall be proud of me yet!"

She was chilled and hurt.

"It is not well to set one's heart on such things," she said. "I fame flies the purser and pursues the flier; I mean to read somewhere; I think it will be in some school exercise. One may go up like a rocket; it is all done like a stick," he said, smiling contentedly. "Very well, I should like to do that better than anything. The rocket does go up, don't you see, and flames and sparkles, and people stop to look at it. What if it does come down? Everything comes down sooner or later. I'd rather be the rocket than the gas-jet in the office that people turn on when they like and off when they like, and never say anything about. Besides," he added, more gravely, "I shall not be the rocket. I don't want to shine for a moment or two without any purpose. I want to be known as one who did great things for his fellow-men and the world; and I shall be known in that way some day. I don't want only to explode momentarily; I want to blaze."

"Wasn't there," she said, "one who blazed the comet of a season?"

"I don't know—I haven't read much poetry. But I should rather be the comet of a season than not blaze at all."

Then throwing himself back on the bench and clasping his hands behind his head with the manner of one who has settled a question, the young man sat in silence a moment. The girl was silent too; she looked up at the pale sky, in which some faint specks of light were already seen. The young wife's hectic, like a loving woman, and she had been under the impression that her love would be career enough for her husband. He, too, was egotistic, but in a different way.

He had repeated with literal correctness the facts of his birth and bringing up. He was now a clerk in an office. At the time when he was first put into that position he felt as if his heart was swelling with pride. To be in an office near the Exchange; to be in a great dark room, with desks, and clerks, and messengers, with gas burning all day long in the winter months; to be spoken of as one of the young men from Aquitaine & Company's office, seemed to him to open a glorious career for young ambition. For his father was a livery-stable keeper, and it was by the favour and kindness of a patron whose carriages the father took care of that the youth was lifted from his lowly situation at an age much more mature than that at which boys usually begin to learn business in such a town, and set with his foot on the first round of commerce's ladder to fortune. The town in which he lived was one where colossal fortunes are made in a few days, and truly are often lost again as quickly, and then sometimes re-made; where the unknown adventurer of last year is the great, luxurious, ostentatious merchant prince of to-day. What might not genius and courage do in such a place?

Meanwhile, however, the young man had only had his foot on the first round of the ladder. For some time his actual duties were hardly more dignified than those of a messenger. He did not find that he was developing more genius for mounting quickly. He seemed to be very far away indeed from the notice, not merely of any of the principals, but even of the superior clerks. While he was still with his father, looking after or trying to look after the livery-stables, the father had been in the habit of giving lessons in riding to young ladies and gentlemen, and sometimes the son, in his absence, had taken his place. He gave lessons in a riding-ground specially laid out for the purpose, and he took the pupils out for train-

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ing gallops along the roads, and in the public parks. The boy could ride like a young centaur. He seemed to manage his horse as unconsciously as he managed his breathing—he breathed, and he rode. One of the girls who took riding lessons of the livery-stable keeper was the daughter of a distinguished advocate and Queen's counsel, Mr. Fanshawe, who came of good family, had a great practice, and, being a Northern man by birth, had bought a property near the town where the livery-stables were kept. This daughter got her lessons in riding mostly from the livery-stable keeper; but sometimes, too, from his son. These two fell in love. After the young man was transferred to the office they corresponded, and occasionally contrived to meet. He succeeded in convincing her that he was a man of genius in a position wholly beneath him, and before whom one day the world must come to bow down.

Why had he got it into his head that he was a man of genius and a master spirit? He had as yet done nothing. He had not even written poems or essays or begun a tragedy. He had not made speeches. He was curiously ignorant on most subjects. His reading had been only a few biographies of men who had risen from lowliness to greatness, some metaphysical books of a cheap and easy kind, the "Count of Monte Cristo" and a life of Mohammed. At the office even the clerks of his own age thought him a stupid fellow. His father never could make much of him, and feared he was hopelessly incapable of getting on. Yet it was settled in the young man's mind that he was a child of genius and of destiny, and that the world was yet to hear the echo of his tread. Most ambitious and clever or silly young men, when they have such convictions about themselves, have also in their minds some ideas as to the path along which they are to move to greatness. One believes himself a poet, another a statesman, another a Michael Angelo of the future, the coming Garrick, the Caesar of the modern time; but our young man had no set notion of this kind. He had not yet made up his mind as to the sort of greatness he was to have. He was not clear, even, as to the sort of greatness he should wish to have. He only said to himself that greatness was his destiny, and left Fate to do her duty. Perhaps it was his figure; perhaps his beautiful deep, dark, dreamy eyes; perhaps his singularly handsome face, looking a little like that of a young Lucifer before the rebellion and the fall; or, it may be that he easily convinced Miss Fanshawe that in loving him she loved dancing genius and predestinated greatness.

It was not for that Miss Fanshawe loved him. She did not care whether he had genius or not, whether he became great or remained small. She loved him because she loved him; loved him for himself, not for the stable keeper's expressed it, and married her lover in defiance of her father, mother, and all his friends. From the day when she left their home secretly to be married her father and mother never saw her again. Not that they would not have been reconciled with her in time; but they waited for her to submit, and she waited for them; and some months beyond a year passed away, and then their daughter was dead. She died a few days after the scene in the park, in childbirth—if that can be called childbirth which brings forth only a dead child.

Has she in the later days of their married life been touched by any doubts as to the truth of her idol? Probably not. Probably she had only been hurt now and then at the thought that love was not enough for him. It is all the same now—she is gone forever.

On the very morning before her death the child of genius retained a formal dismissal from Messrs. Aquitaine's office. He was considered incapable and idle, and they would have no more of him. He sat all the night with his dead wife and his ruined hopes, and with his gone near by her for months and months, proudly convinced that they were not made for each other; and he would not go near him now. He sat all the night alone and steeped in thought. All had gone from him. He was down to the lowest depths of death. He had not a friend on earth. He had only a few pounds in money, and even that was the poor wreck remnant of some money she had left to her by a relative in days when there did not seem the slightest probability of her ever having occasion to spend it. Such was his state. Clearly, it was to be taken in hand by Destiny, the time had about arrived when Destiny ought to be looking after her charge.

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ing gallops along the roads, and in the public parks. The boy could ride like a young centaur. He seemed to manage his horse as unconsciously as he managed his breathing—he breathed, and he rode. One of the girls who took riding lessons of the livery-stable keeper was the daughter of a distinguished advocate and Queen's counsel, Mr. Fanshawe, who came of good family, had a great practice, and, being a Northern man by birth, had bought a property near the town where the livery-stables were kept. This daughter got her lessons in riding mostly from the livery-stable keeper; but sometimes, too, from his son. These two fell in love. After the young man was transferred to the office they corresponded, and occasionally contrived to meet. He succeeded in convincing her that he was a man of genius in a position wholly beneath him, and before whom one day the world must come to bow down.

Why had he got it into his head that he was a man of genius and a master spirit? He had as yet done nothing. He had not even written poems or essays or begun a tragedy. He had not made speeches. He was curiously ignorant on most subjects. His reading had been only a few biographies of men who had risen from lowliness to greatness, some metaphysical books of a cheap and easy kind, the "Count of Monte Cristo" and a life of Mohammed. At the office even the clerks of his own age thought him a stupid fellow. His father never could make much of him, and feared he was hopelessly incapable of getting on. Yet it was settled in the young man's mind that he was a child of genius and of destiny, and that the world was yet to hear the echo of his tread. Most ambitious and clever or silly young men, when they have such convictions about themselves, have also in their minds some ideas as to the path along which they are to move to greatness. One believes himself a poet, another a statesman, another a Michael Angelo of the future, the coming Garrick, the Caesar of the modern time; but our young man had no set notion of this kind. He had not yet made up his mind as to the sort of greatness he was to have. He was not clear, even, as to the sort of greatness he should wish to have. He only said to himself that greatness was his destiny, and left Fate to do her duty. Perhaps it was his figure; perhaps his beautiful deep, dark, dreamy eyes; perhaps his singularly handsome face, looking a little like that of a young Lucifer before the rebellion and the fall; or, it may be that he easily convinced Miss Fanshawe that in loving him she loved dancing genius and predestinated greatness.

It was not for that Miss Fanshawe loved him. She did not care whether he had genius or not, whether he became great or remained small. She loved him because she loved him; loved him for himself, not for the stable keeper's expressed it, and married her lover in defiance of her father, mother, and all his friends. From the day when she left their home secretly to be married her father and mother never saw her again. Not that they would not have been reconciled with her in time; but they waited for her to submit, and she waited for them; and some months beyond a year passed away, and then their daughter was dead. She died a few days after the scene in the park, in childbirth—if that can be called childbirth which brings forth only a dead child.

Has she in the later days of their married life been touched by any doubts as to the truth of her idol? Probably not. Probably she had only been hurt now and then at the thought that love was not enough for him. It is all the same now—she is gone forever.

On the very morning before her death the child of genius retained a formal dismissal from Messrs. Aquitaine's office. He was considered incapable and idle, and they would have no more of him. He sat all the night with his dead wife and his ruined hopes, and with his gone near by her for months and months, proudly convinced that they were not made for each other; and he would not go near him now. He sat all the night alone and steeped in thought. All had gone from him. He was down to the lowest depths of death. He had not a friend on earth. He had only a few pounds in money, and even that was the poor wreck remnant of some money she had left to her by a relative in days when there did not seem the slightest probability of her ever having occasion to spend it. Such was his state. Clearly, it was to be taken in hand by Destiny, the time had about arrived when Destiny ought to be looking after her charge.

At the funeral of his wife his father presented himself. They exchanged a grasp of the hand—very warm on the father's part. The livery-stable keeper asked him to come to his house and stay there. He said he would go there later in the day; and the father felt for him and quietly left him, expecting him to come in the evening, when perhaps he should have called down a little. But he did not come that day, nor the next. He never came. He never wrote. His father might have supposed that his son was dead, perhaps he had killed himself, but that an impression that her love would be career enough for her husband. He, too, was egotistic, but in a different way.

He had repeated with literal correctness the facts of his birth and bringing up. He was now a clerk in an office. At the time when he was first put into that position he felt as if his heart was swelling with pride. To be in an office near the Exchange; to be in a great dark room, with desks, and clerks, and messengers, with gas burning all day long in the winter months; to be spoken of as one of the young men from Aquitaine & Company's office, seemed to him to open a glorious career for young ambition. For his father was a livery-stable keeper, and it was by the favour and kindness of a patron whose carriages the father took care of that the youth was lifted from his lowly situation at an age much more mature than that at which boys usually begin to learn business in such a town, and set with his foot on the first round of commerce's ladder to fortune. The town in which he lived was one where colossal fortunes are made in a few days, and truly are often lost again as quickly, and then sometimes re-made; where the unknown adventurer of last year is the great, luxurious, ostentatious merchant prince of to-day. What might not genius and courage do in such a place?

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