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**Poetry.**  
 OCTOBER.

Conquest—flushed, like a warrior bold,  
 On his mettlesome steed, October brown,  
 Over the hills, the valleys adown,  
 Ritteth;  
 Trampling the rustling leaves of gold  
 As his steed he onward guideth.

At every tramp of his charger's hoof  
 He hurries a treasure and mutters a charm,  
 And the wandering wind a jubilant psalm  
 Singeth;  
 Whilst mischievous frost-sprites stand aloof  
 Nor harm the seed that he flingeth.

But the night-stars whisper to him who  
 wakes,  
 A deeper meaning than dreamers can read,—  
 "Life shall arise from the buried seed;  
 Then know  
 That death gives life for the life he takes,  
 As nature doth forth-show."

Over lakes and rivers he shakes his spear,  
 And the angler stands where the river rolls  
 past,  
 And the purple mountains deep [shadows  
 cast  
 In the tide;  
 And he sees far down in the waters clear  
 The speckled troutlets glide.

Tramp through the orchard, each bough low  
 bends,  
 Laden with treasure October to greet,  
 Eager its blushing wealth at his feet  
 To pour,  
 For the kindly smile that on all he sends  
 Hath made a king twice o'er.

When the fire crackles and logs bright blaze  
 And hallow'd nuts are burning slow,  
 And mirrors to maidens their lovers show,  
 Drill up!  
 And drain to jolly October's praise,  
 In ale that he's kissed, a parting cup.

**A GILDED SIN.**  
 BY THE AUTHOR OF "DORA THORNE,"  
 "WEDDED AND PARTED," "A BRIDE  
 FROM THE SEA," "FROM GLOOM  
 TO SUNLIGHT," &c.

(Continued.)  
 'Never mind that, Sir Jasper,' said Lord  
 Wynleigh. 'I know it, and am going to  
 remedy it. Do not imagine that I am saying  
 to you, give me your daughter now at once  
 —my hands are empty, but she will fill them  
 It is not that. I say, give me the hope of  
 one day calling Katherine my wife, and I  
 will set to work at once. I will make such  
 a name that I shall not be ashamed to ask  
 her to share it. Will you say 'Yes,' Sir  
 Jasper?'

'You speak bravely. You are sure my  
 daughter loves you?'  
 'Kate says so,' the young man replied  
 'and she never speaks falsely.'  
 'Then I give my consent,' said Sir Jasper.  
 'But Katherine is too young to marry yet.  
 She must wait a year or two. The child is  
 but just seventeen. Come back in two years'  
 time to claim her, if in the meantime you  
 have made a position for yourself. I do not  
 care that you should make money, but I do  
 care for the other.'

'I will do it, Sir Jasper,' he replied, 'and  
 you will help me. I shall study under you  
 —help me with your influence. There is a  
 borough vacant now. Help me place my foot  
 on the first rung of the ladder, and I will  
 never cease until I reach the top.'

Long after Lord Wynleigh had left him  
 Sir Jasper sat silent and motionless, listen-  
 ing to the sound of the joy-bells—listening  
 to the music and laughter which filled the  
 old Chace. What was he to do? When the  
 sanguine young lover left him, dark and bit-  
 ter thoughts came to him. He was an Eng-  
 lishman, with a hatred of all fraud and  
 deceit. What could he do? He could never  
 allow Lord Wynleigh to marry Kate under  
 the impression that she was heiress to the  
 grand domain of Queen's Chace and Hurst-  
 wood. She was not so in reality. All his  
 broad lands belonged by right to his elder  
 child, the beautiful dark-eyed Veronica.  
 Before Lord Wynleigh married Katherine  
 he must know the truth. Sir Jasper rose  
 from his seat.

'I am a brave man and a strong man,' he  
 said; 'but I would rather face death than  
 tell my story now.'

It seemed so far away to the middle-aged  
 statesman, the story of his youth—the mad  
 love that had altered his whole life. It  
 would be profanation to him to hear Giulia's  
 name mentioned now. He could imagine the  
 sneers, the comments that would follow.  
 The Opposition journals would be sure to  
 get hold of it, and hold up to public ridicule  
 the one treasured poem of his heart. He  
 could not bear it. Come what might, he  
 would, he must keep his secret yet a little  
 longer; and in the meantime he would have  
 his will prepared—a will in which the truth  
 should be told, and Queen's Chace, with all

the broad lands round Hurstwood, given to  
 his daughter Veronica. At the same time  
 he would put all the papers that went to  
 prove her identity into one packet, and give  
 them to her. Why, because her mother was  
 dead, should he rob her of her birthright?  
 What could he do to atone to her for her  
 long cheerless youth, her cold, joyless life.  
 He could not defraud Giulia's child. If he  
 could have divided the inheritance, all would  
 have been well; but that was impossible.  
 In the Brandon family, when there was no  
 male heir, the eldest daughter succeeded to  
 the Barony, to the title and estates; and  
 there had been several Baronesses. There-  
 fore the inheritance must go to his eldest  
 daughter. That was Veronica.

What would those proud Valdoraines—  
 the proudest people in England—say to him  
 when they heard that Katherine was not his  
 heiress after all? Katherine Brandon's name  
 was known all over England. Sir Jasper  
 was at a loss. His sense of justice and his  
 love of right, his love and his pride, his  
 honesty and his sensitive reserve were all at  
 war. There was but one gleam of comfort.  
 The marriage between Lord Wynleigh and  
 Katherine would not take place yet. Some  
 unforeseen combination of circumstances  
 might take place before then.

'It is not quite the kind of marriage that  
 I expected for Katherine,' said Lady Bran-  
 don when her husband sent for her to tell  
 her. 'Still I shall make no opposition—  
 there is a chance, as you know.'  
 'What chance?' asked Sir Jasper.  
 They tell me that the young Marquis is  
 not only very unsteady, but that he is cer-  
 tainly in declining health,' said Lady Bran-  
 don. 'If it should be so, then Alton will be  
 Earl of Woodwyn. That would be a high  
 position—) should be quite satisfied.'

'My dear wife,' remarked Sir Jasper 'no  
 good comes of hoping for dead men's shoes.'  
 'I am not hoping for them,' said Lady  
 Brandon; 'I am merely saying that it would  
 be an excellent thing for Katherine.'

'Veronica,' said Katherine, 'come to my  
 room when you go to dress for dinner. I  
 want to tell you something.'

And when Veronica went in she started at  
 the beautiful vision. Katherine stood be-  
 fore her in a low dinner-dress of white silk,  
 trimmed with glowing crimson holly-berries,  
 her white shoulders and arms gleaming like  
 pearl, a diamond cross on her white breast  
 and diamond stars in her golden hair. She  
 looked like a dream of beauty. Veronica  
 kissed the pretty shoulders and the white  
 arms.

'How beautiful you are, my darling,' she  
 said. 'You look like the spirit of Christmas  
 Now I see how beautiful Englishwomen can  
 be.'

'I am always beautiful in your eyes, Ver-  
 onica,' she replied.  
 They were standing side by side, Kath-  
 erine all bright and radiant, Veronica, in her  
 pale, gossamer beauty, in a long trailing  
 black dress. The contrast between them  
 was startling.

'I have something to tell you, Veronica,'  
 she said. 'Never mind admiring my dress,  
 never mind my diamonds—look at my face.'  
 'I am looking at it, my darling,' returned  
 Veronica.

'Does it tell you anything?' asked Kath-  
 erine, with a low sweet laughter of perfect  
 content.  
 'Only that it is the dearest face in the  
 world,' replied Veronica, kissing the laugh-  
 ing lips.

'Veronica,' said Katherine, 'whom at  
 this moment should you consider the very  
 happiest girl in all the world?'

'The very happiest of all? Oh, how could  
 I tell?'

'I will tell you. It is myself, Katherine  
 Brandon. And can you guess why I am so  
 happy? It is because—oh, Veronica, how  
 shall I tell you?—it is because some one I  
 love very much loves me—me, you under-  
 stand, Veronica,—not my fortune, not  
 Queen's Chace, but me—loves me—and has  
 asked me to be his wife.'

'His wife,' repeated Veronica softly.  
 Katherine, the laughter loving beauty, was  
 suddenly vested with an importance in her  
 eyes which was marvellous. 'How wonder-  
 ful—how strange?'

'Nay, it is not strange, Veronica. I love  
 him—he loves me. Can you guess who it is?  
 Slowly the dark eyes wandered over the  
 bright face; and then said Veronica an-  
 swered—  
 'It must be Lord Wynleigh.'  
 'Yes,' said Katherine simply, 'it is Lord  
 Wynleigh; and I am not one of the hap-  
 piest, but the happiest girl in all the world.  
 Nevertheless I tell myself that such great  
 joy as mine cannot last—that a time will  
 come when I must suffer and weep and grieve

CHAPTER V.

As Veronica descended the broad  
 case she looked in astonishment at the bril-  
 liant scene that met her gaze on every side.  
 The shining lights, the wealth of evergreens,  
 holly with lovely laughing crimson berries,  
 the graceful laurel with its shining leaves,  
 the dark stately fir and the sweet mystical  
 mistletoe—it was all like a dream to her.  
 Her heart warmed as she gazed. If this was  
 an English Christmas, then might Heaven  
 bless Christmas for evermore! Every one  
 had something kind to say; there was a  
 smile on every face, light in kindly eyes,  
 music in the sound of kindly voices. She  
 thought that while she lived the world  
 never forget the words, 'I wish you a happy  
 Christmas;' and the speakers, the kindly  
 people, so tender and true of heart, were the  
 cold, reserved English who her aunt had  
 told her were so accursed! She looked at  
 the noble faces of the men, faces that told  
 of power and skill, of courage and self com-  
 mand; she looked at the fair blonde faces  
 of the laughing girls and the graceful women;  
 and she thought that the English were a  
 great people, greater than the old stately  
 Venetians. There was not even a tinge of  
 envy in her heart as she noted the lovely  
 younger girls. She was quite unconscious  
 of her own picturesque beauty, of the poeti-  
 cal loveliness of her face, the grace of her  
 figure clad in its trailing black robes.  
 Amongst those fair English girls she looked  
 like a gorgeous passion-flower in the midst  
 of white lilies.

She never forgot the Christmas dinner,  
 her first in England—the grand table with  
 its costly silver and delicate glass, the pro-  
 fusion of flowers and fruits, the spark-  
 ling wines, the laughter, the general  
 air of happiness, while outside the wind  
 wailed among the leafless trees and the stars  
 shone in the Christmas sky. She saw Kath-  
 erine with her bright laughing face and her  
 handsome young lover following her like a  
 shadow. Presently Sir Jasper came up to  
 her.

'Do you like our English way of keeping  
 Christmas, Veronica?' he asked.  
 She looked at him.  
 'It is more beautiful than anything I have  
 ever seen,' she replied; and then he turned  
 abruptly away, for she had looked at him  
 with dead Giulia's eyes.

'Veronica!' said a low deep voice. She  
 turned quickly and saw Lord Wynleigh  
 standing by her side. I have come to ask  
 you if you are pleased. Walk with me  
 through the rooms. You have not wished  
 me a happy Christmas yet.'

'Then I will do it now,' she said; and  
 Lord Wynleigh raised her hand to his lips.  
 'Katherine has been telling me how dear-  
 ly she loves you, and how good you are to  
 her.'

'I love her better than any thing or any  
 one in the wide world,' she replied.  
 He looked half sadly at her.  
 'I have come,' he said, 'to ask you for  
 a little share of that great affection which you  
 give to my peerless Kate. I will deserve it  
 I will give you the true, honest, frank, kind  
 affection of a brother for a sister. Will  
 you accept it?'

She looked at him.  
 'I am bewildered,' she said. 'What has  
 I done that Heaven should give me so much  
 —what have I done? Only a few months  
 since no one loved me—'

'You accept it then?' interrupted Lord  
 Wynleigh. 'If you want a friend you will  
 come to me; if ever you want help of any  
 kind, you will remember that on Christmas  
 Day you promised a stalwart brother to  
 stand between you and the world.'

'I shall never forget,' she said.  
 And Lord Wynleigh left her standing  
 in the doorway of the conservatory while he  
 went in search of Katherine.

Veronica was unutterably happy; in  
 her gray dull life such threads of gold were  
 woven that she was dazzled by them. She  
 had hungered and thirsted for love; now  
 she was lavished upon her. She stood on the  
 same spot still, unconscious of her pict-  
 resque loveliness, watching Katherine and  
 her lover, and as she watched them strange  
 sweet possibilities of life came floating  
 before her. She had thought of herself so long  
 so often as one apart from others, as one  
 whom life held no pleasures, no hopes; now  
 was the dawn of a golden morning, now  
 sweet vague delicious fancies that thrill  
 the heart of a young girl thrilled her. It  
 was that in the golden far-off future such  
 as Alton's for Katherine would fall to  
 her. Perhaps her life too would be crowned  
 with that pure and perfect gift—a noble  
 life if Heaven had such happiness in store  
 for her—

(To be Continued.)

as other people do. Will it be so? She  
 looked wistfully at Veronica as she spoke.  
 'I have read,' she said, 'of ships safe  
 enough to sail in when the sea is calm, but  
 sure to sink when the storm comes on. I  
 think I should be like one of those ships—  
 I should go down in the first storm.'

'We will hope then that a storm will  
 never come,' put in Veronica. 'If it de-  
 pended on me there never should,' she  
 added. 'Still there is one thing I can safely  
 promise you—one thing that I will do. If  
 ever it lies in my power to give you happi-  
 ness, I will give it to you.'

And the time came when the memory of  
 those words weighed down the balance in  
 which she held both lives.

(To be Continued.)