

**LOVE AFTER
MARRIAGE; AND OTHER
STORIES OF THE HEART**

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Love after marriage; and other stories of the heart by Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz

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BY

MRS. CAROLINE LEE HENTZ.

AUTHOR OF "LINDA; OR, THE YOUNG PILOT OF THE BELLE CREOLE," "THE BANISHED SON,"
"COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE; OR, THE JOYS AND PAINS OF AMERICAN LIFE,"
"THE PLANTER'S NORTHERN BRIDE; OR, SCENES IN MRS. HENTZ'S CHILDHOOD,"
"EDITH; OR, MAGNOLIA VALE; OR, THE HEIRESS OF GLENMORE,"
"ERNEST LINWOOD; OR, THE INNER LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,"
"HELEN AND ARTHUR; OR, MISS THESA'S SPINNING-WHEEL,"
"RENA; OR, THE SNOW HERD," "THE LOST DAUGHTER,"
"MARCUS WARLAND; OR, THE LONG MOSS SPRING,"
"ROBERT GRAMM;" A SEQUEL TO "LINDA," ETC.

THIS volume contains some of the most charming stories ever written by Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz, among which will be found: "Love After Marriage," "The Victim of Excitement," "The Blind Girl's Story," "The Parlor Serpent," "The Shaker Girl," "A Rainy Evening," "Three Scenes in the Life of a Belle," "The Fatal Cosmetic," "The Abyssinian Neophyte," "The Village Anthem," "The Brown Serpent," "My Grandmother's Bracelet," and "The Mysterious Etoile."

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LOVE AFTER MARRIAGE.

A STRANGER was ushered into the parlour, where two young ladies were seated, one bonneted and shawled, evidently a morning visiter, the other in a fashionable undress, as evidently a daughter or inmate of the mansion. The latter rose with a slight inclination of the head, and requested the gentleman to take a chair. "Was Mr. Temple at home?" "No! but he was expected in directly." The young ladies exchanged mirthful glances, as the stranger drew nearer, and certainly his extraordinary figure might justify a passing sensation of mirth, if politeness and good feeling had restrained its expression. His extreme spareness and the livid hue of his complexion indicated recent illness, and as he was apparently young, the almost total baldness of his head was probably owing to the same cause. His lofty forehead was above the green shade that covered his eyes in unshadowed majesty, unrelieved by a single lock of hair, and the lower part of his face assumed a still more cadaverous hue, from the reflection of the green colour above. There was something inexpressibly forlorn and piteous in his whole appearance, notwithstanding an air of gentlemanly dignity pervaded his melancholy person. He drew forth his pocket-book, and taking out a folded paper, was about to present it to Miss Temple, who, drawing back with a suppressed laugh, said—"A petition, sir, I suppose?"—then added in a low whisper to her companion—"the poor fellow is perhaps getting up a subscription for a wig." The whisper was very low, but the stranger's shaded though penetrating eyes were fixed upon her face, and the motion of her lips assisted him in a knowledge of their sound; he replaced

the paper in his pocket-book—"I am no petitioner for your bounty, madam," said he, in a voice, whose sweetness fell like a reproach on her ear, "nor have I any claims on your compassion, save being a stranger and an invalid. I am the bearer of a letter to your father, from a friend of his youth, who, even on his death-bed, remembered him with gratitude and affection; will you have the goodness to present to him my name and direction?"

Then laying his card upon the table, he made a low bow and retreated, before Miss Temple had time to apologize, if indeed any apology could be offered for her levity and rudeness. She approached the table and took up the card—"Gracious Heavens!" she exclaimed—"it cannot be possible?—Sydney Allison—that bald, yellow, horrid-looking creature—Sydney Allison! they described him as the perfection of manly beauty—I never will believe it—he is an impostor—the wretch!"

The young lady who was with her, beheld with astonishment, the passion that lighted up Miss Temple's face, and her looks besought an explanation. "Have you not heard," said Miss Temple, "since you came to this city, that I was betrothed; that I had been so from a child, to a young gentleman residing in Cuba, whose uncle was the bosom friend of my father? You must have heard it, for my father has always taken pains to circulate the report, so that no one might presume upon my favour. And this is the delectable bridegroom! the one who has been represented as clothed in every grace calculated to fascinate a female heart—and I, fool that I was, I believed it, and looked forward with rapture to the hour of our first meeting." Here she paused, and throwing herself back in her chair, burst into a passion of tears.

Mary Manning, her more rational companion, endeavoured to soothe the excited feelings of her friend, and suggested to her, that whatever disappointment she might feel with regard to his personal appearance, his character might be such as to awaken a very ardent attachment. "Indeed," added Mary, "I thought there was something quite interesting in his address, and his voice was remarkably persuasive in its tones. He has evidently been very ill, and his bad looks are owing to this circumstance. He will become handsomer by and by. Besides, my dear Augusta, what is mere beauty in a man? It is the prerogative of a woman, and you are so highly gifted

in that respect yourself, you should be willing that your husband should excel in those qualities which men generally arrogate to themselves."

"Husband!" repeated Augusta; "I would as soon take a death's-head for my husband. I care nothing about mere beauty, provided there is intelligence and spirit. But with such a bald, livid-looking wretch at my side, such a living memento of mortality, I should sink into my grave in a fortnight. I never will marry him, unless I am dragged to the altar." Here Mr Temple entered the room, and interrupted her rash speech. Miss Manning too retired, feeling that her presence might be an intrusion. He looked astonished at the agitation of his daughter, who handed him the card, and turning away leaned against the mantel-piece, the image of woe.

"Sydney Allison arrived!" exclaimed Mr. Temple; "where is he? when was he here? and why is he gone?—why—what is the matter with you, Augusta? The first wish of my heart seems accomplished, and I find you weeping. Tell me the meaning of all this?"

"Oh! father," sobbed Augusta, covering her face with her handkerchief, "he is so ugly, and you told me he was so *very* handsome."

Mr. Temple could not forbear laughing at the piteous tone in which Augusta uttered this melancholy truth, though he immediately resumed, in an accent of displeasure, "I am ashamed of your folly—I have always given you credit for being a girl of sense, but you talk like a little fool;—ugly! if a man is not ugly enough to frighten his horse, he is handsome enough. Besides, it is nothing but a whim; I saw him when a child, and he was an uncommonly beautiful boy. I hope you did not behave in this manner before him—why did you suffer him to go away?"

"Why, I did not know him," said Augusta, in considerable trepidation, for she feared her father's anger; "and he looked so thin and woe-begone, I thought he was some foreigner asking charity, and when he took out a paper I thought it a petition, and said something about one—so he was angry, I believe, and went away, saying he had letters for you, from a friend, who was dead."

"And is he dead!—the good old man!—the best, the earliest friend I ever had in the world—dead and gone!" Mr. Temple leaned his face over on his hands, and sat in