

**IN A RASH
MOMENT. IN TWO
VOLUMES. VOL. II**

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In a Rash Moment. In Two Volumes. Vol. II by Jessie McLaren

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JESSIE MCLAREN

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IN A RASH MOMENT.

VOL. II.

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BY

JESSIE McLAREN.

"For the heart must break, ere it grows a soul."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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IN A RASH MOMENT.

CHAPTER I.

A PROPOSAL.

“ And now that the want and the wandering are past,
’Tis but like the winter, comes summer at last.”

I SUPPOSE it is true that marriage, like hanging, goes by destiny.

When, half an hour since, five minutes after two carriages full of church-goers quitted Heatherton, I entered the library, where Mr. Beatoun was waiting by appointment, to discuss my affairs, I had as much idea of cutting my nose off, as of marrying him, yet we are engaged.

VOL. II.

B

By rights, I ought to be in a delicious twitter, though the fact is, I am as cool as a cucumber. Affection has no place in the transaction, which is as complete a marriage of convenience, as ever was arranged in a Parisian salon.

I do not care three straws for the man I shall in a few weeks swear fidelity to, at God's altar, nor, unless I am greatly mistaken, is his affection for me much deeper.

Let me do him the justice to confess, I do not believe he would have proposed, if I had not all but offered myself, or rather cash, for his acceptance.

It came about quite unexpectedly. I mentioned the extreme perplexity I was in, where to seek a home, and he said he should be glad if I could *make* one, by becoming his wife—*Voilà tout !* Not much romance to shake one's nerves, or rush the colour to one's cheeks.

I am thankful he has no love for me! I should hate him if he had.

He requires money, and I shall be a good hum-drum domestic wife, for the few years I hope to live.

If poor Mrs. Frazer's ghost had not scared me, I should have infinitely preferred death by charcoal at Neider Baden, but that being out of the question, marrying Pat is the only resource I can think of, without applying to Horace, which I should have to do, after to-morrow, when the advocate goes.

Heart-unions, they say, are sometimes evolved from chaos, as God made the world; if so, my husband and I have a chance of ending our career, as Darby and Joan; but the immediate comfort of the whole thing is, that I feel protected, and can defy the Morrisons or anybody else, to say or hint a word to my discredit.

It is a mercy Pat departs at nine to-morrow morning. If he stayed longer, he might think himself bound to loverize me, and I could not stand that. I trust when we are married, he will stick to his books, and leave me to my own devices. Above all, he must *never, never* speak evil of my guardian, never mention him at all in fact, and my daily prayer shall be, that since my lot is cast in Edinburgh, Horace and his wife, may have left it for ever, before my return.

Pat is not, and never can be, my elective affinity, as Horace was, but under certain conditions, I don't see why we should not jog-trot through life, amicably enough.

I suspect few of the married couples one meets are hes and shes who preferred each other to all creation, but as often as not, it is a case of two *pis-allers* collared together.

CHAPTER II.

A BRIDE.

HEIGHO ! it is a fine thing to be a bride, at least, in Heatherton House, where the fact white-washes your social blackness, rectifies your "moral obliquity" and makes you the drawing-room pet, instead of a dog with a tin tied to its tail.

Having resolved to swallow our pill, Mr. Beatoun and I do not intend putting off about it, so we are to be married this day four weeks, by Annie Morrison's tame parson.

Our first residence is to be furnished lodgings. It was Pat's proposal, but I gladly