

**A BOOK OF
TRUE LOVERS**

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A Book of True Lovers by Octave Thanet

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FRENCH, ALICE

**A BOOK OF
TRUE LOVERS**

By **OCTAVE THANET,** *pseud.*



**CHICAGO: WAY AND
WILLIAMS. 1 8 9 7**

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English
old settlers
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Note

"The Strike at Glasscock's" was first published in the *Northwestern Miller*, "The Judgment on Mrs. Swift" and "The Court of Last Resort," in *Peterson's Magazine* (1893), "The Dilemma of Sir Guy the Neuter," in *Scribner's Magazine*, "The Ladder of Grief," in *McClure's Magazine*, "Why Abbylonia Surrendered," in *Harper's Bazar*, and "The Captured Dream," in *Harper's Magazine*.

*Nothing is sweeter than Love, nothing
stronger, nothing higher,
Nothing wider, nothing more pleasant,
Nothing fuller or better
In heaven or on earth.*

—Thomas a Kempis.

To the Gentle Reader

Mine Unknown but Dearly Esteemed Friend:

It hath been a pleasure for me to gather into this little volume a few stories regarding the joys and sorrows, the adventures and misadventures of divers true lovers whom I have known, trusting that such may be of profit and entertainment.

The lovers in the first tale, albeit of small pretense to sentiment or to daintiness of living, were, none the less, of assured faithfulness, and fond of each other in their mute fashion. The hero of the old world tale that followeth, did prefer his honor to friendship and the strong movings of compassion and even to love itself, yet seemeth to me, nevertheless, a true lover. In the Judgment on Mistress Swift are two lovers, one of whom was always true, and the other found love only through grief and shame, seeing first the false love, before her soul recognized the true. While Abbylonia, as the speech of the vulgar runneth, "didn't know when she was well off," and mistook true love for the feeble counterfeit that fails under the trials of a common journey into the world; yet for her is great excuse, since there is no loneller lot, nor one

fuller of gallsome toil and privation, than that of the farmer's wife. There is no excuse for the weak creature whose faithful wife appealed to the court of last resort, but since she was satisfied with her sorry bargain he is admitted to the company. Whatever his faults, the man whose grief became the ladder whereon he climbed to a higher and more unselfish love, was a true lover. And the old couple in "The Captured Dream" were the truest lovers of all. If, my dear friend, you perceive that the love herein depicted deals more with married folks than with youths and maidens, may I humbly suggest that as we should call no man happy until he be dead, so likewise may we hesitate to call a lover true until he hath been proved by marriage, which is as a fire or an ireful acid, releasing all the volatile and unsubstantial elements of love, and leaving only the pure gold of the heart.

That so much of it remains in the marriages of our Anglo-Saxon race is the happiest omen for us as a people.

Having thus sketched the lovers in each tale, it is for you to choose which you may care to read, and for me to wish you all happiness in your own loves, present and to come.

I am your most obedient, humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.