

THE HONEYMOON

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The Honeymoon by Alfred W. Cole

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ALFRED W. COLE

**THE
HONEYMOON**

THE HONEYMOON.

BY

ALFRED W. COLE.

Author.—This Volume doth the honied moon present ;
Myself the Man & th' Moon do seem to be.

Un-natured Critic.—It appears, by his small light of discretion,
that he is in the wane.

Midsummer Night's Dream (Slightly altered.)



LONDON :

JAMES BLACKWOOD, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1855.

249.3.367.

TO

The Unmarried Ladies of England,

THIS LITTLE WORK

IS INSCRIBED BY ONE WHO WISHES THEM EACH

"A HONEYMOON."

P R E F A C E.

NOVELS and comedies generally end with a wedding. The former occasionally include a "tag," in which it is announced that husband and wife lived happily to the end of their days, and were blessed with a numerous progeny—such odd notions of happiness do novelists possess!

In this little volume the author has set the above respectable precedents at nought; he has broken through "Routine" as determinedly as the most violent reformer could desire, and instead of making a wedding the climax of his stories, he has used it only as their starting-point. It appears to him quite a mistake to suppose that Honeymoons are all alike, or that all of them strictly deserve the name of *la lune de miel*. He has sketched a few varieties of them truthfully, if not ably, in the desire of pleasing all classes of readers, but especially the fairer portion of them. Whether that object will be attained time and the public must decide.

There is nothing tragic in any of these tales,—Heaven forbid that there should be in the Honeymoon!—but occasionally there is something that is serious, as in every phase of life clouds will alternate with sunshine. But altogether the critics are more likely to find fault with the preponderance of the humorous, or as the grave among them invariably designate it when suffering from ill-humour or indigestion, "the frivolous." This is a fault which the young and light-hearted will readily pardon: if there be graver errors (and doubtless there are many), the author can only offer his apology for them, and bow meekly to the rod which shall chastise him. In the few years of his literary life, it has been his good fortune to gain more than his fair share of praise from reviewers: and if, at times, they have complained that he is not sufficiently serious, he has, at least, the consolation of knowing that he has never penned a line which youth and innocence need blush to read.

And now, in committing this little volume to the hands of his readers, the author sincerely trusts it may not disappoint the expectations of any of them, but that each one whose eye glances over these pages may find in them a little of the honey of pleasure to sweeten the bitter cup of every-day life.

London, April, 1845.

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THE HONEYMOON.

MY OWN HONEYMOON.

THE travelling carriage, with the four greys, was packed; the post-boys were impatient; the crowd outside the door was vociferous; the bride was tearful; the bridesmaids were tender; the papa was pathetic, and the mamma lachrymose; the hall-door was wide open; a sudden rush through it—the bride is in the carriage, the bridegroom is by her side; up go the steps, bang goes the door; “Hooray!” shouts the crowd; “God bless you!” says papa; crack go the postilions’ whips, round spin the wheels—and we are off on our wedding tour.

We? Yes—I and my bride. And let me tell you (if you are a miserable unmarried animal) that it is a monstrously singular sensation—that of finding yourself a bridegroom. I have had a tolerably ex-

tensive experience of sensations in my lifetime. I have been made a human target by a score of armed savages, with nothing to rely on for escape but my horse's heels. I have been face to face with wild beasts in the desert, *my* gun or *their* jaws having to settle accounts between us. I have slept, and on waking found a deadly snake lying on my body. I have been shipwrecked and heard the cry, "We are all lost!" ringing in my ears. I have sunk exhausted in swimming the broad river, felt the water gurgling in my throat and nostrils, and then been seized by the strong hand of a strong swimmer and rescued from the jaws of death. I have heard the bullet, accidentally fired, whiz close to my ear. I have lost my way in the trackless wilderness. I have known sorrows too deep and too sacred to tell to the world. In short, I have had as many events and hazards crammed into the period of my existence as might furnish forth the lives of half a dozen heroes (speaking in the three-volume-novel sense of the word), and yet I repeat that the strangest, most exciting, perplexing, incomprehensible sensation I ever experienced, was caused by finding myself in the chariot with the four greys—a bridegroom!

Look at the dear girl by your side, sobbing because she is leaving parents, home, friends, all that is dear to her save yourself. And you are taking her away ;

it is you who are causing the mental pain that makes those tears to flow so copiously. Don't you feel yourself to be just the least bit of a brute? Don't you think you must have a nasty, hard, insensible heart, when you are not weeping yourself? At all events you feel awkward; what are you to say? You begin some wretched twaddle about undying affection, which is to compensate for the sacrifice she is making; you whisper a great deal of nonsense into the ear of the poor little trembler: you steal your arm round her waist, look lovingly into her face, and if you have reached the open country, and are out of the gaze of impertinent starers, you venture to ———. There; she will be better now, you think, vain egotist that you are. Well, perhaps you are right; she *is* better; she dries her tears, looks trustingly, if timidly, into your eyes—a look that you will never forget if you live to the age of Methuselah; listens, pleased, to what you say; answers in something beyond monosyllables; and by the time you have done the first ten miles, and your four greys are exchanged for a couple of seedy bays, you begin to feel a man again, and grow accustomed to the odd sensation of being—a bridegroom.

But I must not go on generalizing, like a speech of Mr. Gladstone's, when I have to tell a story about two particular individuals—my bride and myself.