

**Pink and White Tyranny**

**By**

**Harriet Beecher Stowe**

## PREFACE.

My Dear Reader,--This story is not to be a novel, as the world understands the word; and we tell you so beforehand, lest you be in ill-humor by not finding what you expected. For if you have been told that your dinner is to be salmon and green pease, and made up your mind to that bill of fare, and then, on coming to the table, find that it is beefsteak and tomatoes, you may be out of sorts; not because beefsteak and tomatoes are not respectable viands, but because they are not what you have made up your mind to enjoy.

Now, a novel, in our days, is a three-story affair,--a complicated, complex, multiform composition, requiring no end of scenery and dramatis personae, and plot and plan, together with trap-doors, pit-falls, wonderful escapes and thrilling dangers; and the scenes transport one all over the earth,--to England, Italy, Switzerland, Japan, and Kamtschatka. But this is a little commonplace history, all about one man and one woman, living straight along in one little prosaic town in New England. It is, moreover, a story with a moral; and for fear that you shouldn't find out exactly what the moral is, we shall adopt the plan of the painter who wrote under his pictures, "This is a bear," and "This is a turtle-dove." We shall tell you in the proper time succinctly just what the moral is, and send you off edified as if you had been hearing a sermon. So please to call this little sketch a parable, and wait for the exposition thereof.

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## CHAPTER I.

### FALLING IN LOVE.

"Who is that beautiful creature?" said John Seymour, as a light, sylph-like form tripped up the steps of the veranda of the hotel where he was lounging away his summer vacation.

"That! Why, don't you know, man? That is the celebrated, the divine Lillie Ellis, the most adroit 'fisher of men' that has been seen in our days."

"By George, but she's pretty, though!" said John, following with enchanted eyes the distant motions of the sylphide.

The vision that he saw was of a delicate little fairy form; a complexion of pearly white, with a cheek of the hue of a pink shell; a fair, sweet, infantine face surrounded by a fleecy radiance of soft golden hair. The vision appeared to float in some white gauzy robes; and, when she spoke or smiled, what an innocent, fresh, untouched, unspoiled look there was upon the face! John gazed, and thought of all sorts of poetical similes: of a "daisy just wet with morning dew;" of a "violet by a mossy stone;" in short, of all the things that poets have made and provided for the use of young gentlemen in the way of falling in love.

This John Seymour was about as good and honest a man as there is going in this world of ours. He was a generous, just, manly, religious young fellow. He was heir to a large, solid property; he was a well-read lawyer, established in a flourishing business; he was a man that all the world spoke well of, and had cause to speak well of. The only duty to society which John had left as yet unperformed was that of matrimony. Three and thirty years had passed; and, with every advantage for supporting a wife, with a charming home all ready for a mistress, John, as yet, had not proposed to be the defender and provider for any of the more helpless portion of creation. The cause of this was, in the first place, that John was very happy in the society of a sister, a little older than himself, who managed his house admirably, and was a charming companion to his leisure hours; and, in the second place, that he had a secret, bashful self-depreciation in regard to his power of pleasing women, which made him ill at ease in their society. Not that he did not mean to marry. He certainly did. But the fair being that he was to marry was a distant ideal, a certain undefined and cloudlike creature; and, up to this time, he had been waiting to meet her, without taking any definite steps towards that end. To say the truth, John Seymour, like many other outwardly solid, sober-minded, respectable citizens, had deep within himself a little private bit of romance. He could not utter it, he never talked it; he would have blushed and stammered and stuttered wofully, and made a very poor figure, in trying to tell any one about it; but nevertheless it was there, a secluded chamber

of imagery, and the future Mrs. John Seymour formed its principal ornament.

The wife that John had imaged, his dream-wife, was not at all like his sister; though he loved his sister heartily, and thought her one of the best and noblest women that could possibly be.

But his sister was all plain prose,--good, strong, earnest, respectable prose, it is true, but yet prose. He could read English history with her, talk accounts and business with her, discuss politics with her, and valued her opinions on all these topics as much as that of any man of his acquaintance. But, with the visionary Mrs. John Seymour aforesaid, he never seemed to himself to be either reading history or settling accounts, or talking politics; he was off with her in some sort of enchanted cloudland of happiness, where she was all to him, and he to her,--a sort of rapture of protective love on one side, and of confiding devotion on the other, quite inexpressible, and that John would not have talked of for the world.

So when he saw this distant vision of airy gauzes, of pearly whiteness, of sea-shell pink, of infantine smiles, and waving, golden curls, he stood up with a shy desire to approach the wonderful creature, and yet with a sort of embarrassed feeling of being very awkward and clumsy. He felt, somehow, as if he were a great, coarse behemoth; his arms seemed to him awkward appendages; his hands suddenly appeared to him rough, and his fingers swelled and stumpy.

When he thought of asking an introduction, he felt himself growing very hot, and blushing to the roots of his hair.

"Want to be introduced to her, Seymour?" said Carryl Ethridge. "I'll trot you up. I know her."

"No, thank you," said John, stiffly. In his heart, he felt an absurd anger at Carryl for the easy, assured way in which he spoke of the sacred creature who seemed to him something too divine to be lightly talked of. And then he saw, Carryl marching up to her with his air of easy assurance. He saw the bewitching smile come over that fair, flowery face; he saw Carryl, with unabashed familiarity, take her fan out of her hand, look at it as if it were a mere common, earthly fan, toss it about, and pretend to fan himself with it.

"I didn't know he was such a puppy!" said John to himself, as he stood in a sort of angry bashfulness, envying the man that was so familiar with that loveliness.

Ah! John, John! You wouldn't, for the world, have told to man or woman what a fool you were at that moment.

"What a fool I am!" was his mental commentary: "just as if it was any thing to me." And he turned, and walked to the other end of the veranda.



"I think you've hooked another fish, Lillie," said Belle Trevors in the ear of the little divinity.

"Who...?"

"Why! that Seymour there, at the end of the veranda. He is looking at you, do you know? He is rich, very rich, and of an old family. Didn't you see how he started and looked after you when you came up on the veranda?"

"Oh! I saw plain enough," said the divinity, with one of her unconscious, baby-like smiles.

"What are you ladies talking?" said Carryl Ethridge.

"Oh, secrets!" said Belle Trevors. "You are very presuming, sir, to inquire."

"Mr. Ethridge," said Lillie Ellis, "don't you think it would be nice to promenade?"

This was said with such a pretty coolness, such a quiet composure, as showed Miss Lillie to be quite mistress of the situation; there was, of course, no sort of design in it.

Ethridge offered his arm at once; and the two sauntered to the end of

the veranda, where John Seymour was standing.

The blood rushed in hot currents over him, and he could hear the beating of his heart: he felt somehow as if the hour of his fate was coming. He had a wild desire to retreat, and put it off. He looked over the end of the veranda, with some vague idea of leaping it; but alas! it was ten feet above ground, and a lover's leap would have only ticketed him as out of his head. There was nothing for it but to meet his destiny like a man.

Carryl came up with the lady on his arm; and as he stood there for a moment, in the coolest, most indifferent tone in the world, said, "Oh! by the by, Miss Ellis, let me present my friend Mr. Seymour."

The die was cast.

John's face burned like fire: he muttered something about "being happy to make Miss Ellis's acquaintance," looking all the time as if he would be glad to jump over the railing, or take wings and fly, to get rid of the happiness.

Miss Ellis was a belle by profession, and she understood her business perfectly. In nothing did she show herself master of her craft, more than in the adroitness with which she could soothe the bashful pangs of new votaries, and place them on an easy footing with her.

"Mr. Seymour," she said affably, "to tell the truth, I have been desirous of the honor of your acquaintance, ever since I saw you in the breakfast-room this morning."

"I am sure I am very much flattered," said John, his heart beating thick and fast. "May I ask why you honor me with such a wish?"

"Well, to tell the truth, because you strikingly resemble a very dear friend of mine," said Miss Ellis, with her sweet, unconscious simplicity of manner.

"I am still more flattered," said John, with a quicker beating of the heart; "only I fear that you may find me an unpleasant contrast."

"Oh! I think not," said Lillie, with another smile: "we shall soon be good friends, too, I trust."

"I trust so certainly," said John, earnestly.

Belle Trevors now joined the party; and the four were soon chatting together on the best footing of acquaintance. John was delighted to feel himself already on easy terms with the fair vision.

"You have not been here long?" said Lillie to John.

"No, I have only just arrived."

"And you were never here before?"

"No, Miss Ellis, I am entirely new to the place."

"I am an old habituée here," said Lillie, "and can recommend myself as authority on all points connected with it."

"Then," said John, "I hope you will take me under your tuition."

"Certainly, free of charge," she said, with another ravishing smile.

"You haven't seen the boiling spring yet?" she added.

"No, I haven't seen any thing yet."

"Well, then, if you'll give me your arm across the lawn, I'll show it to you."

All of this was done in the easiest, most matter-of-course manner in the world; and off they started, John in a flutter of flattered delight at the gracious acceptance accorded to him.

Ethridge and Belle Trevors looked after them with a nod of intelligence at each other.

"Hooked, by George!" said Ethridge.

"Well, it'll be a good thing for Lillie, won't it?"

"For her? Oh, yes, a capital thing for her!"

"Well, for him too."

"Well, I don't know. John is a pretty nice fellow; a very nice fellow, besides being rich, and all that; and Lillie is somewhat shop-worn by this time. Let me see: she must be seven and twenty."

"Oh, yes, she's all that!" said Belle, with ingenuous ardor. "Why, she was in society while I was a schoolgirl! Yes, dear Lillie is certainly twenty-seven, if not more; but she keeps her freshness wonderfully."

"Well, she looks fresh enough, I suppose, to a good, honest, artless fellow like John Seymour, who knows as little of the world as a milkmaid. John is a great, innocent, country steer, fed on clover and dew; and as honest and ignorant of all sorts of naughty, wicked things as his mother or sister. He takes Lillie in a sacred simplicity quite refreshing; but to me Lillie is played out. I know her like a book. I know all her smiles and wiles, advices and devices; and her system of tactics is an old story with me. I shan't interrupt any of her little games. Let her have her little field all to herself: it's time she was married, to be sure."

Meanwhile, John was being charmingly ciceroned by Lillie, and scarcely knew whether he was in the body or out. All that he felt, and felt with a sort of wonder, was that he seemed to be acceptable and pleasing in the eyes of this little fairy, and that she was leading him into wonderland.

They went not only to the boiling spring, but up and down so many wild, woodland paths that had been cut for the adornment of the Carmel Springs, and so well pleased were both parties, that it was supper-time before they reappeared on the lawn; and, when they did appear, Lillie was leaning confidentially on John's arm, with a wreath of woodbine in her hair that he had arranged there, wondering all the while at his own wonderful boldness, and at the grace of the fair entertainer.

The returning couple were seen from the windows of Mrs. Chit, who sat on the lookout for useful information; and who forthwith ran to the apartments of Mrs. Chat, and told her to look out at them.

Billy This, who was smoking his cigar on the veranda, immediately ran and called Harry That to look at them, and laid a bet at once that Lillie had "hooked" Seymour.

"She'll have him, by George, she will!"

"Oh, pshaw! she is always hooking fellows, but you see she don't get married," said matter-of-fact Harry. "It won't come to any thing, now, I'll bet. Everybody said she was engaged to Danforth, but it all ended in smoke."

Whether it would be an engagement, or would all end in smoke, was the talk of Carmel Springs for the next two weeks.

At the end of that time, the mind of Carmel Springs was relieved by the announcement that it was an engagement.

The important deciding announcement was first authentically made by Lillie to Belle Trevors, who had been invited into her room that night for the purpose.

"Well, Belle, it's all over. He spoke out to-night."

"He offered himself?"

"Certainly."

"And you took him?"

"Of course I did: I should be a fool not to."

"Oh, so I think, decidedly!" said Belle, kissing her friend in a

rapture. "You dear creature! how nice! it's splendid!"

Lillie took the embrace with her usual sweet composure, and turned to her looking-glass, and began taking down her hair for the night. It will be perceived that this young lady was not overcome with emotion, but in a perfectly collected state of mind.

"He's a little bald, and getting rather stout," she said reflectively, "but he'll do."

"I never saw a creature so dead in love as he is," said Belle.

A quiet smile passed over the soft, peach-blow cheeks as Lillie answered,--

"Oh, dear, yes! He perfectly worships the ground I tread on."

"Lil, you fortunate creature, you! Positively it's the best match that there has been about here this summer. He's rich, of an old, respectable family; and then he has good principles, you know, and all that," said Belle.

"I think he's nice myself," said Lillie, as she stood brushing out a golden tangle of curls. "Dear me!" she added, "how much better he is than that Danforth! Really, Danforth was a little too horrid: his teeth were dreadful. Do you know, I should have had something of a



struggle to take him, though he was so terribly rich? Then Danforth had been horridly dissipated,--you don't know,--Maria Sanford told me such shocking things about him, and she knows they are true. Now, I don't think John has ever been dissipated."

"Oh, no!" said Belle. "I heard all about him. He joined the church when he was only twenty, and has been always spoken of as a perfect model. I only think you may find it a little slow, living in Springdale. He has a fine, large, old-fashioned house there, and his sister is a very nice woman; but they are a sort of respectable, retired set,--never go into fashionable company."

"Oh, I don't mind it!" said Lillie. "I shall have things my own way, I know. One isn't obliged to live in Springdale, nor with pokey old sisters, you know; and John will do just as I say, and live where I please."

She said this with her simple, soft air of perfect assurance, twisting her shower of bright, golden curls; with her gentle, childlike face, and soft, beseeching, blue eyes, and dimpling little mouth, looking back on her, out of the mirror. By these the little queen had always ruled from her cradle, and should she not rule now? Was it any wonder that John was half out of his wits with joy at thought of possessing her? Simply and honestly, she thought not. He was to be congratulated; though it wasn't a bad thing for her, either.

"Belle," said Lillie, after an interval of reflection, "I won't be married in white satin,--that I'm resolved on. Now," she said, facing round with increasing earnestness, "there have been five weddings in our set, and all the girls have been married in just the same dress,--white satin and point lace, white satin and point lace, over and over, till I'm tired of it. I'm determined I'll have something new."

"Well, I would, I'm sure," said Belle. "Say white tulle, for instance: you know you are so petite and fairy-like."

"No: I shall write out to Madame La Roche, and tell her she must get up something wholly original. I shall send for my whole trousseau. Papa will be glad enough to come down, since he gets me off his hands, and no more fuss about bills, you know. Do you know, Belle, that creature is just wild about me: he'd like to ransack all the jewellers' shops in New York for me. He's going up to-morrow, just to choose the engagement ring. He says he can't trust to an order; that he must go and choose one worthy of me."

"Oh! it's plain enough that that game is all in your hands, as to him, Lillie; but, Lil, what will your Cousin Harry say to all this?"

"Well, of course he won't like it; but I can't help it if he don't. Harry ought to know that it's all nonsense for him and me to think of marrying. He does know it."

"To tell the truth, I always thought, Lil, you were more in love with Harry than anybody you ever knew."

Lillie laughed a little, and then the prettiest sweet-pea flush deepened the pink of her cheeks.

"To say the truth, Belle, I could have been, if he had been in circumstances to marry. But, you see, I am one of those to whom the luxuries are essential. I never could rub and scrub and work; in fact, I had rather not live at all than live poor; and Harry is poor, and he always will be poor. It's a pity, too, poor fellow, for he's nice. Well, he is off in India! I know he will be tragical and gloomy, and all that," she said; and then the soft child-face smiled to itself in the glass,--such a pretty little innocent smile!

All this while, John sat up with his heart beating very fast, writing all about his engagement to his sister, and, up to this point, his nearest, dearest, most confidential friend. It is almost too bad to copy the letter of a shy man who finds himself in love for the first time in his life; but we venture to make an extract:--

"It is not her beauty merely that drew me to her, though she is the most beautiful human being I ever saw: it is the exquisite feminine softness and delicacy of her character, that sympathetic pliability by which she adapts herself to every varying feeling of the heart. You,

my dear sister, are the noblest of women, and your place in my heart is still what it always was; but I feel that this dear little creature, while she fills a place no other has ever entered, will yet be a new bond to unite us. She will love us both; she will gradually come into all our ways and opinions, and be insensibly formed by us into a noble womanhood. Her extreme beauty, and the great admiration that has always followed her, have exposed her to many temptations, and caused most ungenerous things to be said of her.

"Hitherto she has lived only in the fashionable world; and her literary and domestic education, as she herself is sensible, has been somewhat neglected.

"But she longs to retire from all this; she is sick of fashionable folly, and will come to us to be all our own. Gradually the charming circle of cultivated families which form our society will elevate her taste, and form her mind.

"Love is woman's inspiration, and love will lead her to all that is noble and good. My dear sister, think not that any new ties are going to make you any less to me, or touch your place in my heart. I have already spoken of you to Lillie, and she longs to know you. You must be to her what you have always been to me,--guide, philosopher, and friend.

"I am sure I never felt better impulses, more humble, more thankful,

more religious, than I do now. That the happiness of this soft, gentle, fragile creature is to be henceforth in my hands is to me a solemn and inspiring thought. What man is worthy of a refined, delicate woman? I feel my unworthiness of her every hour; but, so help me God, I shall try to be all to her that a husband should; and you, my sister, I know, will help me to make happy the future which she so confidently trusts to me.

"Believe me, dear sister, I never was so much your affectionate brother,

"John SEYMOUR.

"P.S.--I forgot to tell you that Lillie remarkably resembles the ivory miniature of our dear sainted mother. She was very much affected when I told her of it. I think naturally Lillie has very much such a character as our mother; though circumstances, in her case, have been unfavorable to the development of it."

Whether the charming vision was realized; whether the little sovereign now enthroned will be a just and clement one; what immunities and privileges she will allow to her slaves,--is yet to be seen in this story.