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I HAVE LIVED AND LOVED BY MRS. FORRESTER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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 I HAVE LIVED AND LOVED.

BY

MRS. FORRESTER,

AUTHOR OF

“VIVA,” “RHONA,” “MY LORD AND MY LADY,” ETC.

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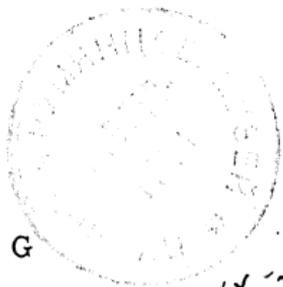
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BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1883.

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XX-5215.

I HAVE LIVED AND LOVED.

CHAPTER I.

A MONTH has elapsed—August is waning, and Vanessa is back at the rose-covered Vicarage in the heart of Southshire. She has repeated over and over again to Susan the events of the last ten months, and Susan has never wearied of hearing about her darling's doings, and of saying with a wise nod that she always knew how it would be. When she hears, however, that Vanessa has danced and conversed with a royal personage, her jaw drops, and she feels that Fate has even overstepped her predictions.

Brandon thoroughly enjoys the repose of the country—he has brought down a couple of horses, and is teaching his wife to ride, an easy enough matter, as he has taken care to provide her with a quiet, well-broken horse, and she is not troubled with nervousness.

Many a night he and she sit out in the moonlight or the starlight drinking in the balmy air laden with spoils from the flowers' hearts. Vanessa twines her arm round his neck and leans her cheek against his, and tries to bring back the feelings and emotions of last year; but the gorged monster, satiety, defeats her. She has the kindest, most affectionate, indulgent husband in the world, but the lover is gone; the last page of the romance has arrived; the end has come, "And so they lived happy ever after."

Vanessa fights against her disappointment; is angry with herself for feeling it, and, now and again, becomes rather unhappy; for there is nothing that causes a sensitive nature so much pain as self-disapprobation. People who are downright ill-tempered or selfish or unprincipled are not uncomfortable because they have no remorse: the ones to suffer are those cursed by a double nature; (probably inherited from an opposite father and mother, with a dash of Heaven knows how many other ancestors thrown in); the ones whose good and bad, kind and unkind instincts are always warring against each other; who know what is right and are madly impelled by a stronger will to do what is wrong. Vanessa, whilst vehemently arguing to her conscience that she ought to be the very happiest woman in the world, knows herself to be dissatisfied and disappointed. She