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**After Long Grief and Pain, by 'rita'.**

**Humphreys Eliza Margaret**

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**Author: Humphreys Eliza Margaret**

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AFTER LONG GRIEF AND PAIN.



AFTER LONG GRIEF  
AND PAIN.

By "RITA,"

AUTHOR OF "FAUSTINE," "MY LADY COQUETTE," "FRASOLETTA,"  
"A SINLESS SECRET," "COUNTESS DAPHNE," ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

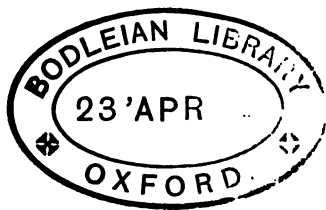
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VOL. I.





## AFTER LONG GRIEF AND PAIN.

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### PROLOGUE.

THERE are three pictures before me as I sit here alone to-night. Turn where I will my eyes see them ; look where I may they face me in my solitude.

The first is the face of a child. Dark solemn eyes, half wondering and half sad, look out from a screen of leaves. The face has no beauty yet. It is dark and pale, and framed by masses of brown waveless hair. As I look at it, a sense of fragrance—the heavy-scented fragrance

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of a tropical atmosphere—comes over me ; the sky is spread with a million stars ; the cool still air blows over a silver sea, waveless and rippleless as a lake. Is it some dream-vision of the past on which I gaze ? As I ask the question the scene fades. It is replaced by another.

A balcony bathed in summer moonlight—a balcony filled with drooping creepers, and fragrant lilies, and burning red of roses. Two people stand on it—a man and a woman. The sound of laughter, the strains of music, the babble of voices, glad and gay and mirthful, reach them from within. But they neither hear nor heed it at all. Both faces are white as death, pallid with despair, reckless with passion. The rays of moonlight fall upon the white silvery lustre of the woman's dress, upon the gleam of diamonds in her