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Elizabeth Keckley

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Behind the Scenes

FORMERLY A SLAVE



ELIZABETH KECKLEY

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Elizabeth Keckley : Behind the Scenes: Formerly a Slave (Thirty Years a Slave, and Four Years in The White House) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Behind the Scenes: Formerly a Slave (Thirty Years a Slave, and Four Years in The White House):

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By Italophile Book Reviews
You can see where the screenwriter took many of his elements for the Spielberg film "Lincoln", from this eyewitness in the Lincoln White House. The ghostwriter did not do the author justice by inserting the flowery language. You and see the divided heart that the great evil of slavery gave so many people who grew up enslaved, but also blood relatives to their owners and brought up as the lesser relatives; the important fact excluded from the book is that the author was the illegitimate child of the slave owner, as was her mother before her. And then she was given to her half-brother as his family slave, and then to her half-niece, from whom she was allowed to buy her freedom.² of 2 people found the following review helpful. I feel as though I have just returned from the 19th century
By JJ
This is such a rich, beautifully written account of the civil war years. It's as though I actually stood before the Lincoln's in their private chamber and witnessed the streets of Washington City. From the excitement of victory and bands playing to the stench of death, it became very real. Mrs. Keckley is(was) a remarkable woman, a true inspiration for all. I have read elsewhere that her memoir met with hateful public criticism, truly undeserved. And I thought that was a contemporary problem with Twitter and Facebook. I highly recommend this book to history students studying the American Civil War or anyone curious about that time period. Born into slavery in Virginia inn 1818, Elizabeth takes us through her life as a slave, eventually buying her freedom. Her gift and craft of dressmaking provided her a good living. Being a wise business woman, she chose Washington City as her home and through her renowned skill became modiste to Mrs. Lincoln. She takes us through her time in New York City with Mrs. Lincoln after the president's death. She ends her story there. But there is much more to the ending which shows her strong character.

Behind the Scenes, Formerly a Slave, By Elizabeth Keckley, Thirty Years a Slave, and Four Years in The White House, Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley (sometimes spelled Keckly; February 1818 May 1907)[²] was a former slave who became a successful seamstress, civic activist and author in Washington, DC. She was best known as the personal modiste and confidante of Mary Todd Lincoln, the First Lady. Keckley had moved to Washington in 1860 after buying her freedom and that of her son in St. Louis. She created an independent business in the capital based on clients who were the wives of the government elite. Among them were Varina Davis, wife of Jefferson Davis; and Mary Anna Custis Lee, wife of Robert E. Lee. After the American Civil War, Keckley wrote and published an autobiography, Behind the Scenes: Or, Thirty Years a Slave and Four Years in the White House (1868). It was both a slave narrative and a portrait of the First Family, especially Mary Todd Lincoln, and considered controversial for breaking privacy about them. It was also her claim as a businesswoman to be part of the new mixed-race, educated middle-class that were visible among the leadership of the black community. Keckley's relationship with Mary Todd Lincoln, the President's wife, was notable for its personal quality and intimacy, as well as its endurance over time.