



Behind the Scenes: Or, Thirty Years a Slave and Four Years in the White House (Illustrated)

Elizabeth Keckley

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Elizabeth Keckley's **Behind the Scenes: Or, Thirty Years a Slave and Four Years in the White House** is both a riveting slave narrative and a fascinating insider's look at the First Family during the Lincoln administration. Keckley was the First Lady's seamstress and confidante and the publication of her memoirs in 1868 caused a storm of controversy. The press excoriated Keckley for revealing the intimate secrets of her employers and Mary Todd Lincoln cut off her friendship with Keckley. Lincoln's eldest son had the book suppressed.

After the White House, Keckley went on to become one of the first successful independent black business owners in America, forming a profitable line in dress-making for the wives of prominent politicians, including the spouses of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. She also formed an important charity for black veterans of the Civil War. Supporters of Keckley's Contraband Relief Association included Frederick Douglass, Henry Highland Garnet, J. Sella Martin, as well as prominent white figures, such as Wendell Phillips.

Includes image gallery with rare shots of Keckley and her contemporaries.

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