



Patricia M. Muhammad  
presents

# *Love Captured*

## Special Object(s)

Objects within a story sometimes become just as meaningful as the characters that the author has set upon a winding course to resolve a conflict or plot. In fantasy, readers will be invited to join the adventure of the main character as they unleash the power of an amulet or a wand. Sometimes a newly discovered weapon leads a detective or hunter to uncover a mystery. In historical romance, decadence is the norm so it is often a wonder how any accessory can be made to stand out amongst the others. Sometimes it is not jewelry but the palaces and manors that hold significance in progressing a story along. Inheritance, architecture or even the furnishings which adorn them may possess pertinent hints as to where the story will lead. Some stories contain more than one object that is presented before the reader to further delve beyond the superficial. *Love Captured* has at least two.

The reader begins their journey with Emmeline as she leaves the comforts of the mansion of the North Carolina colony. She voyages as a stowaway across the Atlantic armed with one clue from her now deceased mother concerning her identity and where her future lies. Upon her arrival in Liverpool, she encounters the impoverished of the shantytown and eventually a rebellious duke who is immediately enthralled by her. The protagonist seeks to fill the void of her form. Her truest identity that will enable her to live the life she was meant to—that includes with Duke John.

There are at least three times in which Emmeline will be associated with pearls. Pearls are gems that are created over an extended period time and by pressure as it lies embedded within a shell. What becomes of this young maiden who wishes to take her true form that is destined to be shaped in England as she arms herself with courage, undergoes the vigor of a strenuous voyage with little breathing room to settle in Liverpool. Societal innuendo, her encounter with Duke John who becomes easily enamoured with her causes Emmeline to resist this newfound culture. Yet it is within these new strictures that she pulls her strength, not relenting from the audacity of Lady Edna, never wavering in seeking all the assistance that the benevolent society may offer. After Lady Emmeline accepts Duke John's courtship, he invites her to a social gathering in honour of his father, Stephen Harrison that is hosted by his mother. The duke is proud of the beautiful maiden he has on his arm. She is dressed in beautiful optic white Tahitian pearls. It is here that Duke John announces their engagement.



They continue to spend time together. One night Emmeline dreams. Two men fight for a precious pearl. One man is her ally while the other seeks to steal the pearl for his own sadistic use. This gray pearl belongs to Emmeline. This gray pearl is actually representative of Emmeline. It is beautiful, forged under pressure and seeks to be free. She awakens only after the one gentleman who fought for her benefit seemingly fails. Yet Emmeline knows she will triumph despite the temporal illusion. The pearl, the fruition of her true self is hers alone to capture.

Yet this is not the only pearl in which Emmeline encounters. The seaman, William, who protects her since their initial encounter, notices his charge's signet ring. He recognizes the crest, but it holds a far greater meaning. When she and Duke John prepare for their wedding day, the butler, Nathaniel presents his master with a Harrison heirloom. It was bequeathed to the duke and held great significance. Emmeline and John notice that the signet on her ring as well as his are quite similar. Later as they prepare to consummate their marriage, they face the rings towards each other. The ring in John's possession has a façade that opens. It is not until the rightful two are together that the ring presents what lied within. A small pearl sitting atop a piece of velvet. John Harrison, Emmeline's now husband had the pearl. Duke John had Emmeline. Perhaps he was the one who fought alongside her in that dream. Maybe it was her husband who had helped her all along since her arrival in Liverpool, England. She was the pearl of an incalculable price.