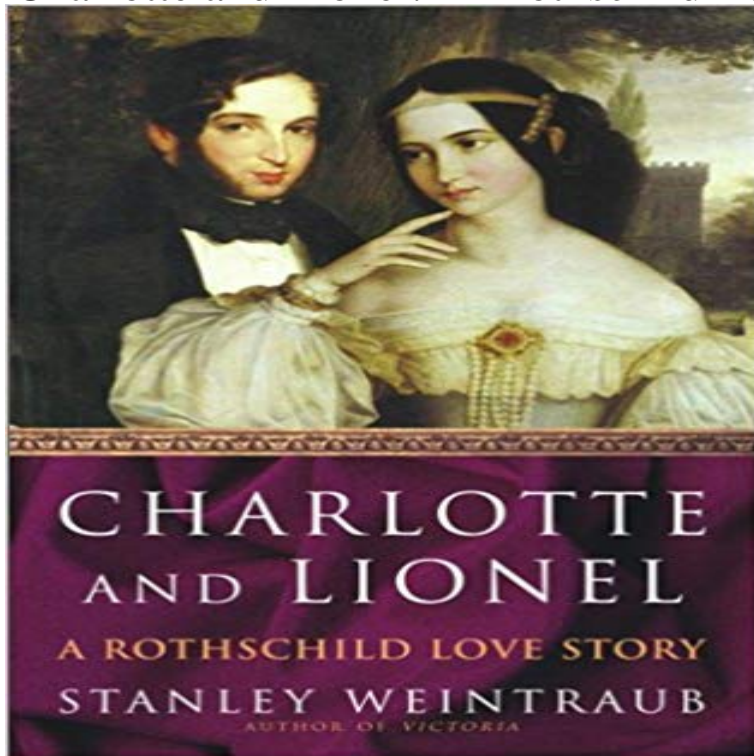


Charlotte and Lionel: A Rothschild Love Story



Charlotte was young and beautiful. Lionel, almost ten years older, was rich and her cousin. Theirs was an arranged betrothal joining two branches of Europe's most powerful banking firm. It seemed an unlikely love match, and even their wedding had to survive catastrophe. Yet their marriage lasted through tragedies and triumphs. Charlotte became one of the grand chatelaines of the Victorian era; Lionel, England's leading financier, persevered through years of bigotry to become the first of his faith to be seated in Parliament. In *Charlotte and Lionel*, acclaimed biographer Stanley Weintraub, using full access to the Rothschild family archives, tells the story of their stunning and surprising love for each other, opening a fascinating window into a memorable age. Together, Charlotte and Lionel de Rothschild challenged and redefined their place in Victorian society. At her celebrated salons, England's leading politicians and policy makers met and shared opinions. Disraeli regularly argued politics with adversaries; Gladstone discussed religion with Charlotte; Tom Thumb (with P. T. Barnum) entertained; artists and writers and aristocrats mingled. Refusing to swear a Christian oath, Lionel was elected to Parliament half a dozen times before he could take his seat. After a decade-long battle, the House of Commons changed its rules, enabling Lionel and future Jewish or non-Christian members to serve. Lionel (and, behind the scenes, Charlotte) influenced events worldwide, helping to fund relief to a starving Ireland, aiding persecuted Jews in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, brokering the purchase of the Suez Canal, and arranging for France's postwar reparations to Germany. Yet despite the distractions of their power, glamour, and wealth, and problems of health for which money could buy no solutions, they remained intensely devoted to each other and their family.

Although Charlotte lost a daughter, then her beloved husband, and had to come back herself from severe illness, she remained unbroken. Charlotte and Lionel presents the evocative tale of one of the least known yet most touching love stories from the glamorous decades of Victorian England.

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