



# The House of Mirth (Oxford World's Classics)

*Edith Wharton, Martha Banta*

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Since its publication in 1905 *The House of Mirth* has commanded attention for the sharpness of Wharton's observations and the power of her style. Its heroine, Lily Bart, is beautiful, poor, and unmarried at 29. In her search for a husband with money and position she betrays her own heart and sows the seeds of the tragedy that finally overwhelms her.

*The House of Mirth* is a lucid, disturbing analysis of the stifling limitations imposed upon women of Wharton's generation. Herself born into Old New York Society, Wharton watched as an entirely new set of people living by new codes of conduct entered the metropolitan scene. In telling the story of Lily Bart, who must marry to survive, Wharton recasts the age-old themes of family, marriage, and money in ways that transform the traditional novel of manners into an arresting modern document of cultural anthropology.

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