

First published in 1905, THE HOUSE OF MIRTH shocked the New York society it so deftly chronicles, portraying the moral, social and economic restraints on a woman who dared to claim the privileges of marriage without assuming the responsibilities. Lily Bart, beautiful, witty and sophisticated, is accepted by old money and courted by the growing tribe of nouveaux riches. But as she nears thirty, her foothold becomes precarious; a poor girl with expensive tastes, she needs a husband to preserve her social standing and to maintain her in the luxury she has come to expect. Whilst many have sought her, something - fastidiousness or integrity - prevents her from making a suitable match.

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