
Edith Wharton

Glimpses of the Moon

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Author: Edith Wharton

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Description

Nick Lansing and Susy Branch are young, attractive, but impoverished New Yorkers. They are in love and decide to marry, but realise their chances of happiness are slim without the wealth and society that their more privileged friends take for granted. Nick and Susy agree to separate when either encounters a more eligible proposition. However, as they honeymoon in friends' lavish houses, from a villa on Lake Como to a Venetian palace, jealous passions and troubled consciences cause the idyll to crumble. Edith Wharton has perceptively described the choices faced by Nick and Susy; the same dilemma still facing those seduced by the pleasures of society.

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Insightful reviews

MaryAnn: This book read like a Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers musical...about two people who really love each other and should be together, but they keep on having misunderstandings and the characters have such close brushes with finally understanding what the other is up to, that it is positively agonizing for the reader. This got a little tiresome after a while. I don't know what I think of Wharton as a comic author...the genre seems to partially eclipse the exquisite sadness that is her genius.

Cynthia: Susy and her beau Nick have both grown up around rich people though their own families have lost their fortunes. Susy makes her way in the world flitting from invitation to invitation acting as an unpaid but rewarded assistant to her rich friends. Nick has dreams of making a living by his writing. They meet and fall in love but one rich matron from Susy's circle tells her, in effect, hands off of Nick because she has designs on him. Susy tells Nick they have to part and why but by then they've fallen too deeply for one another. They decide take a risk and get married with the caveat that if either of them has a chance to form a more remunerative partnership the other would agree to a divorce. By the 1920's divorce has become somewhat common place in their set. First though they promise one another a lovely wedding and at least a year of one another's company. They set out on their European honeymoon staying in first one rich friend's palazzo and then another's chateau having an exquisite time spending their wedding cheques.

As their mutual feelings deepen they both want to give the other more. But they can't. In her trying, Susy begins to seem grasping and amoral to Nick and he in turn feels ashamed he can't give her more either. He hates seeing her manipulate situations and people to try and get the best for him. Things completely fall apart when he catches her obligingly covering up their hostess's illicit affair. He means to leave for a few days to clear his head but in the mean time they both hear rumors about one another, add 2 and 2 and get 19. (Too bad they couldn't do

this type of math with their fortunes!) I don't want to give too much away so I'll stop here. I love how Wharton keeps you guessing the outcome right up to the end.

If, like me, you've never heard of this title it's a shame because Wharton did a LOT of lovely writing beyond her better known classics such as "Age of Innocence", "House of Mirth", and "Ethan Fromm". In fact this and others of her books, "A Mother's Recompense" comes to mind, are even subtler and I want to even say more adult than her better known works.

Some quotes:

".....at each step they took, their heavy feet dragged a great load of bliss."

"At first she could not make out what mysterious change had come over him, and why it was that in looking at him she seemed to be looking at a stranger; then she perceived that his voice sounded as it used to sound when he was talking to other people; and she said to herself, with a sick shiver of understanding, that she had become an 'other person' to him."

""My poor Coral, of what use can I ever be to you? What you need is to be loved."

She drew back and gave him one of her straight strong glances: "No," she said gallantly, "but just to love.""

Beth: First published in 1922, this is considered somewhat glib and satirical (in comparison with Wharton's other work). It's the story of Susy and Nick who though without money themselves, are hanger's-on to the wealthy, the international set that cruises Europe, dashing from Rome to Paris to cruises on the Aegean. In order for Susy and Nick to continue in this life, each must marry into money (sell themselves, in other words). Instead they decide to marry each other and live off wedding gifts. Part of their agreement is that each will release the other if something better comes along. What they don't expect is that they both fall in love with each other. Susy (who is the more managing of this two-some) is asked to do "favors" for friends (like cover up affairs) in exchange for the use of villas and servants and last seasons clothing. Nick gets a bad case of conscience and objects to what Susy does and the couple splits up, he to cruise with a newly rich family whose daughter hopes to snag him and Susy to continue to drift and be courted by an English lord. How Nick and Susy sort out their misunderstandings and (possibly) get back together makes enjoyable reading, primarily for its historical value on the culture of the times --- the cusp of the great changes that would take place as a result of the 1929 stock crash and the aftermath of World War I (which interestingly enough, is never mentioned.)

Chris: "Age of Innocence" is a favourite motion picture of mine. yet after my event with "Gone With the Wind" i used to be very leery of interpreting the book. i made a decision to begin with a narrative that I knew not anything about. i do not learn loads of fiction, yet i love traditionally established stories, and am fascinated about the Gilded Age, so this looked like a secure wager for me. I loved this book, even though i'll in basic terms relate to the conditions via my

imagination. vacations and vacationing with the monied set in round the flip of the final century, a palace in France, a villa in Italy, a yacht day trip to Greece is whatever i will be able to in simple terms imagine. however the important plot was once relatively only a tale approximately newlyweds who get married ahead of they understand something approximately one another and imagine that every thing will simply figure out swimmingly. within the comparable vein as "Barefoot within the Park" or the other glossy tale in regards to the combined up and loopy global of having to understand the individual you've gotten promised to spend the remainder of your existence with, whereas within the context of an international the place divorce appears to be like a ceremony of passage, this tale will resonate in the course of the decades. even if the subjects are universal, having it set in one other time, in one other global made the whole lot only a nice little journey via time.

Gail: Edith Wharton's ebook written within the early 1920's approximately Nick and Susan who locate themselves in "society" with none money. They marry for comfort with the plan to reside off the kindness in their filthy rich "friends" for one year, after which to work out what higher possibilities come their means individually. The tale reads like a comedy of blunders because the couple is going from one false impression to a different among themselves and among the friends that supply them holiday villas for his or her use. they come at one villa to discover teenagers left in the back of for them to deal with and at one other they're recruited to be a part of the owner's clandestine adultery coverup. among themselves, the open marriage turns into very advanced emotionally and Wharton makes use of the connection to discover many gender problems with the day. Wharton's outdated type establishing line is great: "It rose for them--their honey-moon--over the waters of a lake so famed because the scene of romantic raptures that they have been fairly happy with now not having been afraid to settle on it because the surroundings in their own."

Ali: i've got but to learn as many Edith Wharton novels as i want to – even though I do have approximately 5 TBR. This one instantly appealed to me – and but i've been left really disillusioned in it. Edith Wharton is known for having written novels that raise the lid at the society during which she lived. within the Glimpses of the Moon, she satirises these brilliant younger issues with extra money than sense, who divorce their spouses at a drop of a hat, and the poorer hangers on who stay off them. "Apart from the excitement of her and hearing her--of having fun with in her what others much less discriminatingly yet as liberally appreciated--he had the sense, among himself and her, of one of those free-masonry of precocious tolerance and irony. that they had both, in early youth, taken the degree of the realm they occurred to reside in: they knew simply what it was once worthy to them and for what reasons, and the group of those purposes lent to their intimacy its final beautiful touch." Susy department and Nick Lansing reside in a society pushed by means of wealth, a global the place the idle wealthy flit among the playgrounds of the wealthy, Paris, Italy, English stately homes. Susy and Nick are a part of this set yet depend upon the generosity in their buddies to live. those pals marry to fit their virtue – leaving romance out of the question, then they skulk round having affairs – and if divorce is needed quietly get on with it as though it truly is of no consequence. Susy and Nick have fallen in love, they're absolutely acutely aware that they each one must be in search of prosperous companions – yet in its place they arrive up with their very own experiment. Their cut price is to marry – after which to dwell so long as attainable at the hospitality in their acquaintances – relocating from position to place. they believe they could preserve going for a 12 months – yet a

part of the discount is that are meant to the opportunity of a higher marriage come alongside for both of them the opposite will stream aside. besides the fact that this cut price doesn't think about their emotions and Nick has lengthy had sufficient of this sort of life. Susy is slower to grasp this parasitic way of life has consequences, that during go back for weeks spent blissfully in a Venetian villa they're anticipated to play a component in a slightly disagreeable deceit. When Nick realises that a dear pearl pin he has been awarded with is in check for helping this deceit, and that Susy has been absolutely conscious of way over he has, he's livid and leaves Susy in disgust. Nick behaves with a certain quantity of obdurate arrogance, storming off, hooking up with a yacht choked with nouveau riche, the Hicks, and never writing to Susy. Nick's identify is quickly associated with that of the daughter, Coral, who even if now not beautiful, has many comparable pursuits as Nick, with whom she will get on well. in the meantime Susy paints on a smile, pretends to be unconcerned and includes on together with her buddies as traditional – for a while. Her identify is quickly associated with that of her nice buddy English aristocrat Streff – who has all at once come right into a large fortune, a name and an property upon the unexpected dying of his cousin. With neither of the younger Lansings writing to the other, they could merely preserve tune of one another through the gossip columns and society pages of the click – resulting in the most obvious misunderstandings so liked of romance writers. “Like a weary load the accrued hypocrisies of the final months had dropped from her: she was once herself again, Nick's Susy, and not anyone else's. She sped on, staring with vibrant bewildered eyes on the stately facades of the I. a. Murette quarter, the views of naked trees, the awakening glitter of shop-windows protecting out to her everything she could by no means back have the ability to buy...” It in all fairness noticeable from the beginning of this novel – that there'll be a cheerful finishing – this can be definitely a morality tale, even if the reader can't aid yet suppose that Wharton cherished her valuable characters an excessive amount of to split them completely. Susy too, quickly sickens of the life-style she is leading, and realises that she nonetheless loves her younger husband. She may well just like the concept of being rich, that allows you to purchase extraordinary jewels and furs herself instead of have wonderful issues basically proficient to her through her patronising badly behaving friends, yet she isn't so proud of what she's going to need to do to achieve such wealth. I'm nonetheless no longer fully convinced why this novel used to be just a 3 superstar learn for me. there's a light, frivolous tone to the radical – regardless of Wharton's first-class writing, this is often could be a tone I don't particularly like, in particular while i used to be awaiting whatever deeper as i used to be analyzing Edith Wharton. I additionally didn't like a number of the characters – I in general don't have to like characters i'm studying approximately – yet as a consequence their behaviour simply infuriated me. I additionally loathed the approach to life that Wharton highlights during this novel – i'm yes she intended it to encounter as loathsome, however it simply served to disengage me. i'm convinced i'll be interpreting extra Edith Wharton soon; I simply have to do not forget that no longer each novel could be the home of Mirth.

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