



The Age of Innocence

Edith Wharton (1862 - 1937)

Read by:	Elizabeth Klett	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
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Genre:	Fiction		

Newton Archer is the man who has everything. Heir to one of New York's prominent families, a gentleman lawyer, popular and successful, he is engaged to the beautiful but conventional May Welland when May's cousin, the exotic and worldly Countess Ellen Olenska, arrives from Poland after separating from her husband. Newland finds himself hopelessly smitten by the countess and helplessly trapped by the conventions and merciless judgments of his time and place. *The Age of Innocence* proceeds to entangle the three in a tale of passion pitted against the constraints and duties of New York society in the 1870's, with outcomes that show that even those who seem to have everything don't always get what they really want.

The Age of Innocence was serialized in four parts by the *Pictorial Review* in 1920 before publication in book form. It went on to win the 1921 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, the first ever win by a book written by a woman. It ranks 58th on the Modern Library of the Top 100 Works of Fiction. The book has been adapted for stage and film five times, the most recently by Martin Scorsese in 1993.

Edith Wharton (January 24, 1862 – August 11, 1937) was an American writer and designer best known for her stories featuring an insider's view of America's wealthy and privileged class. She was born Edith Newbold Jones into an upper crust family (the Joneses of the phrase "keeping up with Joneses") and was raised in the thick of New York society. In 1885 she married well-bred Bostonian Edward Wharton. They traveled widely and eventually settled in 1902 at the Mount, her estate in Lenox, Massachusetts. Edward suffered from an increasingly acute depression, deemed incurable in 1908, and they divorced in 1913, subjecting her to the opprobrium of her peers. She moved to France shortly thereafter, dividing her time between Paris and a villa in Provence, returning to America only once in 1923, to accept an honorary degree from Yale University. She won the Pulitzer Prize in 1921 for *The Age of Innocence*, the first woman to do so, and was nominated for the Nobel Prize in 1927, 1928, and 1930.