



## The House of Mirth

Edith Wharton (1862 - 1937)

Read by:	Elizabeth Klett	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	12 hours 27 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1096
Language:	English	UPC:	0684758936745
Style:	Solo	MSLP:	\$11.99
Genre:	Fiction		

*The House of Mirth* is a novel of manners set in the milieu of the New York upper class in the 1890's, described as a "hot-house of traditions and conventions". The title is taken from Ecclesiastes 7:4: "The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth." It is the story of an unmarried woman, Lily Bart, who faces the pressure to marry well to maintain her social status despite her feelings for a less wealthy suitor. She is deceived and betrayed by seeming friends, who gossip and spread rumors that cause her to fall from grace.

Written while Edith Wharton lived at The Mount, her home in Lenox, Massachusetts, and published in 1905, *The House of Mirth* sold 140,000 copies between October and the end of December. The favorable review in the *New York Times* described it as "a novel of remarkable power". It ranks 69th on the Modern Library list of the Top 100 Works of Fiction. It has been adapted for the stage and film numerous times, most recently in 2000 by director Terence Davies.

**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.