

# **THE GLIMPSES OF THE MOON**

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The Glimpses of the Moon by Edith Wharton

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**EDITH WHARTON**

**THE GLIMPSES  
OF THE MOON**



By EDITH WHARTON

THE GLIMPSES OF THE MOON

THE AGE OF INNOCENCE

SUMMER

THE REEF

THE MARNE

FRENCH WAYS AND THEIR MEANING

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# THE GLIMPSES OF THE MOON

BY

EDITH WHARTON

AUTHOR OF "THE AGE OF INNOCENCE," "THE HOUSE  
OF MIRTH," "ETRAN FROME," "THE REEF," ETC.



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## **PART I**





## THE GLIMPSES OF THE MOON

### I

**I**T rose for them—their honey-moon—over the waters of a lake so famed as the scene of romantic raptures that they were rather proud of not having been afraid to choose it as the setting of their own.

“It required a total lack of humour, or as great a gift for it as ours, to risk the experiment,” Susy Lansing opined, as they hung over the inevitable marble balustrade and watched their tutelary orb roll its magic carpet across the waters to their feet.

“Yes—or the loan of Strefford’s villa,” her husband emended, glancing upward through the branches at a long low patch of paleness to which the moonlight was beginning to give the form of a white house-front.

“Oh, come—when we’d five to choose from. At least if you count the Chicago flat.”

“So we had—you wonder!” He laid his hand on hers, and his touch renewed the sense of marvellous exultation which the deliberate survey of their adventure always roused in her. . . . It was characteristic that she merely added, in her

steady laughing tone: "Or, not counting the flat—for I hate to brag—just consider the others: Violet Melrose's place at Versailles, your aunt's villa at Monte Carlo—and a moor!"

She was conscious of throwing in the moor tentatively, and yet with a somewhat exaggerated emphasis, as if to make sure that he shouldn't accuse her of slurring it over. But he seemed to have no desire to do so. "Poor old Fred!" he merely remarked; and she breathed out carelessly: "Oh, well—"

His hand still lay on hers, and for a long interval, while they stood silent in the enveloping loveliness of the night, she was aware only of the warm current running from palm to palm, as the moonlight below them drew its line of magic from shore to shore.

Nick Lansing spoke at last. "Versailles in May would have been impossible: all our Paris crowd would have run us down within twenty-four hours. And Monte Carlo is ruled out because it's exactly the kind of place everybody expected us to go. So—with all respect to you—it wasn't much of a mental strain to decide on Como."

His wife instantly challenged this belittling of her capacity. "It took a good deal of argument to convince you that we could face the ridicule of Como!"

"Well, I should have preferred something in a lower key; at least I thought I should till we got here. Now I see that this place is idiotic unless

one is perfectly happy; and that then it's—as good as any other."

She sighed out a blissful assent. "And I must say that Streffy has done things to a turn. Even the cigars—*who* do you suppose gave him those cigars?" She added thoughtfully: "You'll miss them when we have to go."

"Oh, I say, don't let's talk to-night about going. Aren't we outside of time and space . . . ? Smell that guinea-a-bottle stuff over there: what is it? Stephanotis?"

"Y-yes. . . . I suppose so. Or gardenias. . . . Oh, the fire-flies! Look . . . there, against that splash of moonlight on the water. Apples of silver in a net-work of gold. . . ." They leaned together, one flesh from shoulder to finger-tips, their eyes held by the snared glitter of the ripples.

"I could bear," Lansing remarked, "even a nightingale at this moment. . . ."

A faint gurgle shook the magnolias behind them, and a long liquid whisper answered it from the thicket of laurel above their heads.

"It's a little late in the year for them. they're ending just as we begin."

Susy laughed. "I hope when our turn comes we shall say good-bye to each other as sweetly."

It was in her husband's mind to answer: "They're not saying good-bye, but only settling down to family cares." But as this did not happen to be in his plan, or in Susy's, he merely echoed her laugh and pressed her closer.