

## APPENDICES

### Synopsis of The House of Mirth

Lily Bart is a girl of an upper-middle class family in New York. As a child, she lived luxuriously and comfortably, until her father's business goes bankrupt, and Lily and her mother are forced to live in a bad condition. Her mother once tells Lily that she must get their previous life back someday.

After her mother's death, Lily stays with her stingy aunt, Mrs. Peniston, who only supplies her with little amount of money. Lily, however, still cannot let herself go of the habit of spending money. Knowing this fact and remembering her mother's words, she plans to marry someone very wealthy.

By the time she needs money, Lily entrusts her small amount of money to Gus Trenor, her friend's husband, to be invested in the stock market. Since then, she receives money every month from him. When Lily asks for his help, Gus thinks that Lily is attracted to him, but actually she is not. When Gus learns this truth, he feels used and asks her to sleep with him to return his kindness and for making him think that she likes him. Her refusal makes him angry and he shows her how people actually look at her. Lily, who is very embarrassed, promises him to return all the money he has given to her. Since this incident, she calls off all her plans to marry a rich man.

When Mrs. Peniston dies, she only leaves \$ 10,000 to Lily. It is almost the same as the amount she owes Gus. As the inheritance is not given immediately, Lily tries hard to work in order to survive, yet she never succeeds in any jobs. As the situation is getting worse, she starts to consume sleeping pills. In the end, the inheritance arrives earlier than expected, but tragically at that time Lily has felt there is no use to continue her life. She commits suicide by taking an overdose of pills.

### **Synopsis of Sister Carrie**

Caroline Meeber is an eighteen-year-old girl who lives in rural Wisconsin. She has many dreams in her life, therefore she decides to go to Chicago to realize her dreams.

On the train to Chicago, she meets a traveling salesman named Charles Drouet and they become friends. In Chicago, Carrie stays in her sister's house and gets a job in a shoe factory. When she falls sick because of the job, she meets again with Drouet. He asks her to leave her job and her sister, and stay with him. She accepts his offer.

During her stay with Drouet, he buys her beautiful wardrobe, improves her appearance, and asks her to play in a theater. Surprisingly, Carrie performs well in the play. She really enjoys those changes in her life so that she no longer wants to get back to poverty.

One day, Drouet introduces her to George Hurstwood, a rich saloon manager. Both Carrie and Hurstwood are attracted to each other and soon they have an affair. When Hurstwood's wife finds out about this affair and asks for a

divorce, he embezzles the money from the bar he manages and lures Carrie to run away with him to Canada. Carrie agrees. She leaves Drouet and marries Hurstwood. Later they get back to New York.

They live happily at first, but three years later he loses his job and runs out of money soon afterwards without ever getting a new job. Carrie, who has become more dissatisfied with him, starts to find an employment in a New York's theater. She begins to rise from a chorus girl to small speaking roles. Climbing the ladder to success, she decides to leave Hurstwood, like what she has done to Drouet.

### **Biography of Edith Wharton**

Edith Newbold Jones was born on January 24, 1862 in New York City. She had a good education background and spoke French and German fluently. She began her career as a writer by writing poems, short stories, and ghost stories. When she was twenty-three years old, she married Edward Robins Wharton. In 1901, she started building her estate, the Mount, which has now become a National Historic Landmark in Massachusetts. There she wrote her novels, The Valley of Decision (1902) and The House of Mirth (1905), which was that year's best-seller.

In 1907, she moved to Paris and six years later she permanently stayed there. When World War I took place, she devoted herself to helping refugees and orphans in France and Belgium. She helped to raise funds, create hostels and schools and find employment for women. For these efforts, she was awarded the title of Chevalier in the French Legion of Honour in 1916. Based on her experiences throughout the war, she wrote a diary and the essays entitled Fighting

in France (1915) and The Maine (1918). When the war ended, she left Paris for the country life.

In 1920, she finished writing The Age of Innocence, which won her a Pulitzer Prize. Leaving America for almost sixteen years, she only came back once to receive an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Yale in 1923. She was also elected as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters organization. Edith Wharton remained an active writer until she died of stroke on August 11, 1937.

Source: “Edith Wharton”, Wharton V-VII

### **Biography of Theodore Dreiser**

Theodore Herman Albert Dreiser was born on August 27, 1871 in Terre Haute, Indiana. He was the twelfth of thirteen children to a German-Catholic immigrant family. As his family experienced hard times during his childhood, he only had little opportunity to get education. He decided not to finish high school and moved to Chicago to look for a job. He had jobs there as well as a chance to study in Indiana University, but only for a year.

Having a desire to be a reporter, he worked for Chicago Globe newspaper and for St. Louis Globe-Democrat. In 1898, he moved to New York after getting married. His first novel, Sister Carrie, was published in 1900 and reaped controversies. It was followed by Jennie Gerhardt a year later. His other novel, An American Tragedy, got its first commercial success in 1925. Although primarily known as a novelist, Dreiser also wrote many short stories. By the late 1920s, he was considered as an old warrior in the battles for American literary freedom.

Outside the field of writing, he was interested in politics and scientific-philosophical study. His political activities started in 1927, when the Soviet government invited him to Moscow to attend the anniversary celebration of the October Revolution. In the 1930s, he wrote little fiction since he devoted himself to political activities; he joined an international peace conference in Paris and became an advocate in America for the victims of the Spanish Civil War. Dreiser himself admitted that he was a socialist and five months before his death, he joined the Communist Party. On December 28, 1945 he died of heart failure, in Hollywood, California.

Source: "Theodore Dreiser", Riggio