

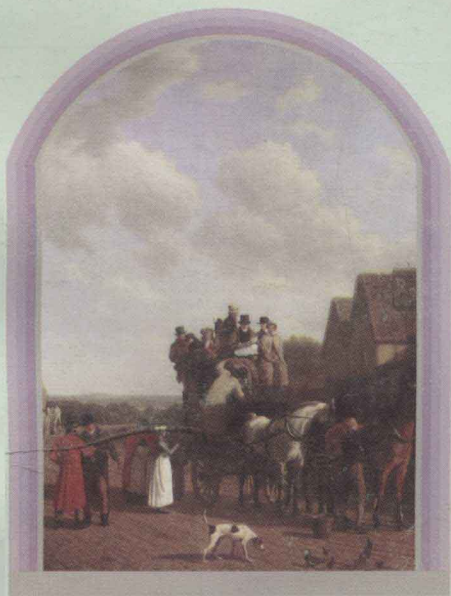
# Roman Fever and The Other Two

英美文学精品详注丛书

第二辑 第四册

## 罗马热

〔美〕伊迪丝·华顿 著



中国对外翻译出版公司

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[美] Edith Wharton 著  
伊迪丝·华顿

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Edith Wharton

**ROMAN FEVER, The Other Two**

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## 《罗马热》

伊迪丝·华顿(1862-1937) 真名叫作伊迪丝·琼斯,生于她自己所谓的“旧纽约最后一批有闲阶级家庭之一”。1885年,嫁给一个富有的波士顿人爱德华·沃顿,和他一起住在罗得岛的新港。后来他们迁往马萨诸塞州的伦诺克斯,最终移居欧洲。他们的婚姻一开始便遇到了麻烦,因此她为了解除神经紧张,就接受了医生的劝告,开始写作。

她最初创作的短篇小说,都发表在《抄写员杂志》上。自本世纪初至第一次世界大战爆发,她出版了多部小说。1905年,《欢乐之家》问世,大获成功,她首次受到了批评家和读者的好评。

1906年访问巴黎期间,结识了她的同代人美国著名作家亨利·詹姆斯,她的生活和创作都深受他们友谊的影响。1907年,沃顿举家迁居欧洲。1910年,夫妻分居,1912年正式离婚。大战期间,她极少写作,一心从事救援工作,因而荣获荣誉勋位勋章和利奥波德勋章。战后,直到去世,她时而住在里维埃拉自己的越冬之家,时而住在巴黎北郊的别墅中。她最终在巴黎北郊的别墅中去世,享年75岁。

伊迪丝共写了35部作品和无数个短篇小说。她是第一个荣获普利策文学奖(1920年因《天真的

时代》)的妇女,也是第一个获得耶鲁大学文学博士学位的妇女。1930年,当选为美国文学艺术院院士。

她的其它作品包括:《试金石》(1900),《决定之谷》(1902),《伊坦·弗洛美》(1911),《沙洲》(1912),《乡村风俗》(1913),《旧纽约》(1924),《小说创作》(1925),《搭了架子的哈德逊河》(1929)。她的最后一部作品《回眸一瞥》(1934),是她的自传。

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Edith Wharton

# Roman Fever

and

## The Other Two

**Edith Wharton** (New York 1862-France 1937) was born Edith Jones in what she herself referred to as "one of the last leisured-class families of old New York". In 1885 she married a wealthy Bostonian, Edward Wharton, and went to live with him in Newport, Rhode Island. They later moved to Lenox, Massachusetts and finally to Europe. Their marriage was troubled from the start, and she began writing on the advice of her physician for relief from nervous stress.

She published her first short stories in "Scribner's Magazine", and from the turn of the century to the outbreak of the First World War published numerous volumes of fiction. Her first critical and popular success, *The House of Mirth*, appeared in 1905.

During a visit to Paris in 1906 she met her famous American contemporary, Henry James, whose friendship was a major influence on her life and work. The Whartons moved to Europe in 1907. They separated in 1910 and finally divorced in 1912. She wrote little during the war, devoting her time to relief efforts, for which she was awarded the Légion d'Honneur and the Order of Leopold. After the war, to the end of her life, she divided her time between her winter home on the Riviera and her villa north of Paris, where she died at the age of 75.

In all, Edith Wharton wrote over 35 books and innumerable short stories. She was the first woman to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize (for *The Age of Innocence*, 1920) and the first woman to receive a Doctorate of Letters from Yale University. In 1930 she became a member of The American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Her other books include: *The Touchstone* (1900); *The Valley of Decision* (1902); *Ethan Frome* (1911); *The Reef* (1912); *The Custom of the Country* (1913); *Old New York* (1924); *The Writing of Fiction* (1925); *Hudson River Bracketed* (1929). Her last book, *A Backward Glance* (1934), was her autobiography.

# ROMAN FEVER

## I

From the table at which they'd been lunching two American ladies of ripe but well-cared for middle age moved across the lofty terrace of the Roman restaurant and, leaning on its parapet, looked first at each other, and then down on the outspread glories of the Palatine and the Forum, with the same expression of vague but benevolent approval.

As they leaned there a girlish voice echoed up from the stairs leading to the court below. "Well, come along, then," it cried, not to them but to an invisible companion, "and let's leave the young things to their knitting"; and a voice as fresh laughed back: "Oh, look here, Babs, not actually knitting—" "Well, I mean figuratively," rejoined the first. "After all, we haven't left our poor parents much else to do..." and at that point the turn of the stairs engulfed the dialogue.

The two ladies looked at each other again, this time with a twinge of smiling embarrassment, and the smaller and paler one shook her head and coloured slightly.

"Barbara!" she murmured, sending an unheard rebuke after the mocking voice in the stairway.

The other lady, who was fuller, and higher in colour, with a small determined nose supported by vigorous black eyebrows, gave a good-humoured laugh. "That's what our daughters think of us!"

Her companion replied by a deprecating gesture. "Not of us individually. We must remember that. It's just the collective modern idea of mothers. And you see—" Half guiltily she drew from her handsomely-mounted black hand-bag a twist of crimson silk run through by two fine knitting needles. "One never knows," she murmured. "The new

**lunching**: having their midday meal.

**ripe**: mature.

**lofty**: high. **terrace**: open rooftop platform.

**leaning**: resting; supporting themselves. **parapet**: low wall.

**outspread**: displayed. **glories**: wonders; magnificence.

**vague**: slight; mild. **benevolent**: kindly, charitable.

**girlish**: immature, feminine. **echoed**: reverberated.

**leading**: that went. **court**: area enclosed by surrounding buildings.

**cried**: shouted. **invisible**: unseen. **companion**: person with her.

**knitting**: *handwork with yarn and needles*.

**fresh**: young, youthful. **laughed back**: replied, laughing. **look**

**here**: come now; be reasonable. **Babs**: diminutive of Barbara.

**figuratively**: not literally; metaphorically. **rejoined**: responded.

**point**: moment. **engulfed**: swallowed; silenced.

**dialogue**: conversation.

**twinge**: pang; sudden, sharp feeling. **embarrassment**: self-

conscious distress. **paler**: lighter-complexioned. **coloured**:

blushed; grew red in the face. **rebuke**: admonition.

**mocking**: ridiculing; *here*, mildly.

**fuller**: more ample. **higher in colour**: less pale.

**determined**: (*fig.*) firm; resolute. **supported**: (*fig.*) reinforced.

**vigorous**: (*fig.*) dynamic; energetic. **good-humored**: unoffended.

**deprecating**: dismissive.

**collective**: shared-by-all.

**drew**: brought out. **handsomely-mounted**: expensive and well-

made. **hand-bag**: purse. **twist**: red silk yarn. **run through**:

pierced. **fine**: thin. **murmured**: said in a low voice.

system has certainly given us a good deal of time to kill; and sometimes I get tired of just looking—even at this” Her gesture was now addressed to the stupendous scene at their feet.

The dark lady laughed again, and they both relapsed upon the view, contemplating it in silence, with a sort of diffused serenity which might have been borrowed from the spring effulgence of the Roman skies. The luncheon hour was long past, and the two had their end of the vast terrace to themselves. At its opposite extremity a few groups, detained by a lingering look at the outspread city, were gathering up guide books and fumbling for tips. The last of them scattered, and the two ladies were alone on the air-washed height.

“Well, I don’t see why we shouldn’t just stay here,” said Mrs. Slade, the lady of the high colour and energetic brows. Two derelict basketchairs stood near, and she pushed them into the angle of the parapet, and settled herself in one, her gaze upon the Palatine. “After all, it’s still the most beautiful view in the world.”

“It always will be, to me,” assented her friend Mrs. Ansley, with so slight a stress on the “me” that Mrs. Slade, though she noticed it, wondered if it were not merely accidental, like the random underlinings of old-fashioned letter-writers.

“Grace Ansley always was old-fashioned,” she thought; and added aloud, with a retrospective smile, “It’s a view we’ve both been familiar with for a good many years. When we first met here we were younger than our girls are now. You remember?”

“Oh, yes, I remember,” murmured Mrs. Ansley, with the same undefinable stress.—“There’s that head-waiter wondering,” she interpolated. She was evidently far less sure than her companion of herself and her rights in the world.

“I’ll cure him of wondering,” said Mrs. Slade, stretching her hand toward a bag as discreetly opulent-looking as

**a good deal:** a lot. **time to kill:** idle time.

**addressed:** directed. **stupendous:** colossal; monumental.

**At their feet:** below and before them.

**relapsed upon:** returned to.

**contemplating:** pondering; meditating on. **diffused:** spread-out.

**serenity:** tranquility. **borrowed:** taken.

**effulgence:** radiance; brilliance.

**vast:** immense.

**extremity:** end. **detained:** held up; delayed.

**lingering:** prolonged. **gathering up:** collecting (putting in readiness). **fumbling:** searching clumsily.

**scattered:** dispersed; went away in various directions. **air-**

**washed:** open; breezy. **height:** elevation; high vantage.

**derelict:** abandoned. **basketchairs:** woven wicker chairs.

**angle:** corner.

**gaze:** eyes/look fixed.

**view:** panorama; scenery.

**assented:** agreed.

**slight:** mild. **stress:** emphasis.

**wondered:** asked herself.

**random:** arbitrary; purposeless. **old-fashioned:** outdated; anachronistic.

**aloud:** speaking. **retrospective:** reflective; nostalgic.

**undefinable:** vague.

**wondering:** curious; doubtful. **interpolated:** interjected.

**far less sure:** much less confident.

**cure him of:** remedy his. **stretching:** extending.

**discreetly:** modestly; tastefully. **opulent-looking:** high-quality in appearance.

Mrs. Ansley's. Signing to the head-waiter, she explained that she and her friend were old lovers of Rome, and would like to spend the end of the afternoon looking down on the view—that is, if it did not disturb the service? The head-waiter, bowing over her gratuity, assured her that the ladies were most welcome, and would be still more so if they would condescend to remain for dinner. A full moon night, they would remember...

Mrs. Slade's black brows drew together, as though references to the moon were out-of-place and even unwelcome. But she smiled away her frown as the head-waiter retreated. "Well, why not? We might do worse. There's no knowing, I suppose, when the girls will be back. Do you even know from where? I don't!"

Mrs. Ansley again coloured slightly.

"I think those young Italian aviators we met at the embassy invited them to fly to Tarquinia for tea. I suppose they'll want to wait and fly back by moonlight."

"Moonlight—moonlight! What a part it still plays. Do you suppose they're as sentimental as we were?"

"I've come to the conclusion that I don't in the least know what they are," said Mrs. Ansley. "And perhaps we didn't know much more about each other."

"No; perhaps we didn't."

Her friend gave her a shy glance. "I never should have supposed you were sentimental, Alida."

"Well, perhaps I wasn't." Mrs. Slade drew her lids together in retrospect; and for a few moments the two ladies, who had been intimate since childhood, reflected how little they knew each other. Each one, of course, had a label ready to attach to the other's name; Mrs. Delphin Slade, for instance, would have told herself, or any one who asked her, that Mrs. Horace Ansley, twenty-five years ago, had been exquisitely lovely—no, you wouldn't believe it, would you?... though, of course, still charming, distinguished... Well, as a girl she had been exquisite; far more beautiful than her daughter, Barbara, though certainly Babs, according

**Signing**: signalling; gesturing.  
**old lovers**: long-time admirers.  
**spend**: pass.

**bowing**: bending down (*a servile gesture*). **gratuity**: tip (*voluntary payment for service*).

**condescend**: be so kind as (*note that this exchange is not directly quoted*).

**references**: allusions. **out-of-place**: inappropriate.

**frown**: scowl; displeased facial expression. **retreated**: moved away; withdrew.

**aviators**: airplane pilots.

**by moonlight**: in the evening, when the moon is shining.

**What a part it still plays**: it is still an important factor (*an exclamatory, romantic metaphor, as if the moonlight were interpreting a role in a drama*). **sentimental**: romantic. **come to the conclusion**: gradually understood.

**shy**: reticent. **glance**: brief look. **should**: (*British*) would.

**drew her lids together**: closed her eyes (eyelids).

**intimate**: closely acquainted.

**label**: (*fig.*) stereotype.

**attach to the other's name**: describe the other.

**exquisitely**: perfectly; flawlessly. **lovely**: beautiful.

**charming**: gracious. **distinguished**: of fine bearing.

to the new standards at any rate, was more effective—had more edge, as they say. Funny where she got it, with those two nullities as parents. Yes, Horace Ansley was—well, just the duplicate of his wife. Museum specimens of Old New York. Good looking, irreproachable, exemplary. Mrs. Slade and Mrs. Ansley had lived opposite each other—actually as well as figuratively—for years. When the drawing-room curtains in No. 20 East 73rd Street were renewed, No. 23, across the way, was always aware of it. And of all the movings, buyings, travels, anniversaries, illnesses—the tame chronicle of an estimable pair. Little of it escaped Mrs. Slade. But she had grown bored with it by the time her husband made his big coup in Wall Street, and when they bought in upper Park Avenue had already begun to think: “I’d rather live opposite a speak-easy for a change; at least one might see it raided.” The idea of seeing Grace raided was so amusing that (before the move) she launched it at a woman’s lunch. It made a hit, and went the rounds—she sometimes wondered if it had crossed the street, and reached Mrs. Ansley. She hoped not, but didn’t much mind. Those were the days when respectability was at a discount, and it did the irreproachable no harm to laugh at them a little.

A few years later, and not many months apart, both ladies lost their husbands. There was an appropriate exchange of wreaths and condolences, and a brief renewal of intimacy in the half-shadow of their mourning; and now, after another interval, they had run across each other in Rome, at the same hotel, each of them the modest appendage of a salient daughter. The similarity of their lot had again drawn them together, lending itself to mild jokes, and the mutual confession that, if in old days it must have been tiring to “keep up” with daughters, it was now, at times, a little dull not to.

No doubt, Mrs. Slade reflected, she felt her unemployment more than poor Grace ever would. It was a big drop from being the wife of Delphin Slade to being his widow. She had always regarded herself (with a certain conjugal pride)



**according ... standards:** in keeping with modern fashion. **at any rate:** in any case; nonetheless. **had more edge:** was more dynamic (*literally*, was sharper). **as they say:** to use the vernacular. **Funny:** curious; odd. **nullities:** insignificant, valueless things. **duplicate:** twin, double. **Museum specimens:** (*satirical*) perfect examples. **irreproachable:** blameless; impeccable. **exemplary:** admirable; outstanding (*note the irony in the direct contrast between disparagement and praise*). **drawing-room:** formal reception room. **No. 20:** number 20 (the Ansley's address). **renewed:** changed. **No. 23:** the Slade household. **movings ... illnesses:** human activities and events in general. **tame:** uninteresting; conventional. **chronicle:** record; history. **estimable:** respectable. **escaped:** went unnoticed by. **coup:** (*French*) sudden success. **bought in:** bought a new home in. **speak-easy:** clandestine nightclub (*during Prohibition—the period between 1920 and 1933, when the sale of alcoholic beverages was forbidden in the U.S.*). **raided:** suddenly visited by the police, to seize the property and arrest the inhabitants. **launched:** introduced (as a joke). **made a hit:** was a success. **went the rounds:** was repeated among the people in their social circle. **at a discount:** of little value (*a financial term*).

**wreaths:** funereal flowers. **condolences:** sympathies; words of consolation. **mourning:** bereavement; sorrow; loss.

**run across:** encountered; met.

**the modest appendage of:** (*fig.*) in a secondary role to (*literally, an auxiliary part of minor importance*). **salient:** prominent.

**lot:** situation; life and fortune.

**“keep up” with:** (*double meaning*) move at the same speed as; stay informed about. **dull:** boring.

**unemployment:** idleness.

**drop:** comedown.

**conjugal:** marital.