



Lady Audley's Secret (Oxford World's Classics)

Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Lyn Pykett

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When beautiful young Lucy Graham accepts the hand of Sir Michael Audley, her fortune and her future look secure. But Lady Audley's past is shrouded in mystery, and Sir Michael's nephew Robert has vague forebodings. When Robert's good friend George Talboys suddenly disappears, he is determined to find him, and to unearth the truth. His quest reveals a tangled story of lies and deception, crime and intrigue, whose sensational twists turn the conventional picture of Victorian womanhood on its head. Can Robert's darkest suspicions really be true?

A publishing sensation in its day, *Lady Audley's Secret* is a thrilling novel of deception and villainy in which the golden-haired heroine is not at all what she seems. But it is not just a pot-boiler. Indeed, Mary Elizabeth Braddon's terrific plot touches on many contemporary social concerns, including class, madness, and the separate roles of men and women. Lyn Pykett's introduction illuminates Braddon's fascinating tale of bigamy, murder, impersonation, and blackmail in the context of the nineteenth-century sensation novel and Braddon's immensely successful career. Throughout the book, thorough notes elucidate literary and historical allusions and shed light on the social mores of the day. In addition, the book includes an up-to-date bibliography and a full chronology of Braddon's life and work.

Lady Audley's Secret was an immediate bestseller, and readers have enjoyed its thrilling plot ever since its first publication in 1862. This marvelous new edition introduces Braddon's portrait of her scheming heroine to a new generation of readers.

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