



The Tale of Genji (Vintage Classics)

Shikibu Murasaki

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In the eleventh century Murasaki Shikibu, a lady in the Heian court of Japan, wrote the world's first novel. But The Tale of Genji is no mere artifact. It is, rather, a lively and astonishingly nuanced portrait of a refined society where every dalliance is an act of political consequence, a play of characters whose inner lives are as rich and changeable as those imagined by Proust. Chief of these is "the shining Genji," the son of the emperor and a man whose passionate impulses create great turmoil in his world and very nearly destroy him. This edition, recognized as the finest version in English, contains a dozen chapters from early in the book, carefully chosen by the translator, Edward G. Seidensticker, with an introduction explaining the selection. It is illustrated throughout with woodcuts from a seventeenth-century edition.

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