



The Woodlanders (Oxford World's Classics)

Thomas Hardy

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Love and the erratic heart are at the center of Hardy's "woodland story." Set in the beautiful Blackmoor Vale, *The Woodlanders* concerns the fortunes of Giles Winterborne, whose love for the well-to-do Grace Melbury is challenged by the arrival of the dashing and dissolute doctor, Edred Fitzpiers. When the mysterious Felice Charmond further complicates the romantic entanglements, marital choice and class mobility become inextricably linked. Hardy's powerful novel depicts individuals in thrall to desire and the natural law that motivates them.

This is the only critical edition of the novel, which was Hardy's own favorite "as a story," that is based on a comprehensive study of the manuscript and incorporates later revisions. The new introduction by Penny Boumelha considers the novel in the context of Hardy's career, the characters' relationships with one another, the role of destiny and individual choice, narrative perspective, and the community. This edition also contains a new and up-to-date bibliography and a new chronology.

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