

Ruth

by Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell
(1810-1865)

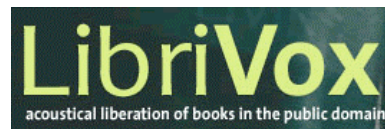
Ruth is a social novel, dealing with Victorian views about sin and illegitimacy. It is a surprisingly compassionate portrayal of a 'fallen woman', a type of person normally outcast from respectable society. The title of the novel refers to the main character Ruth Hilton, an orphaned young seamstress who is seduced and then abandoned by gentleman Henry Bellingham. Ruth, pregnant and alone, is taken in by a minister and his sister. They conceal her single status under the pretence of widowhood in order to protect her child from the social stigma of illegitimacy. Ruth goes on to gain a respectable position in society as a governess, which is threatened by the return of Bellingham and the revelation of her secret. (*Wikipedia*)



Elizabeth Gaskell

Total running time: 18:41:30

Read by Cynthia Lyons



Cover design by Kathryn Delaney
Painting by Ford Maddox Brown, detail of *Henry and Millicent Fawcett*, (1872)

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