



The Rape of the Lock

Aubrey Beardsley, Alexander Pope

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Only rarely in publishing history has the ideal edition of a literary work been created, where text, typography, and illustrations complement one another perfectly. Among the few examples are the Kelmscott Chaucer, Baskerville's Milton, and Beardsley's *Salome*. Another such book is the 1896 edition of Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley.

Beardsley's elaborate drawings for *The Rape of the Lock* were created during the last phase of his brief career. This nearly Romantic period, characterized by rich, brilliantly imagined decoration and ornamentation and by high textual contrasts, was perfectly suited to the blend of mock-heroic, satire, and delicate fancy of Pope's poems. As Beardsley's biographer R. A. Walker wrote, "These drawings show a verve, a wit and appreciation of the poem than can scarcely be matched in English literature." Using his unique line and "black blot" technique, Beardsley created a masterpiece of design and mood.

This Dover edition reproduces the first edition: the complete text of the five-canto poem, notes, seven full-page drawings, two half-page drawings, and the original cover design by Beardsley.

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