



# The Hand of Ethelberta (Penguin Classics)

*Thomas Hardy*

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## **The Hand of Ethelberta (Penguin Classics)** Thomas Hardy

Adventuress and opportunist, Ethelberta reinvents herself to disguise her humble origins, launching a brilliant career as a society poet in London with her family acting incognito as her servants. Turning the male-dominated literary world to her advantage, she happily exploits the attentions of four very different suitors. Will she bestow her hand upon the richest of them, or on the man she loves? Ethelberta Petherwin, alias Berta Chickerel, moves with easy grace between her multiple identities, cleverly managing a tissue of lies to aid her meteoric rise. In *The Hand of Ethelberta*, Hardy drew on conventions of popular romances, illustrated weeklies, plays, fashion plates and even his wife's diary in this comic story of a woman in control of her destiny.

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