

At Fault (Penguin Classics)

Kate Chopin

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Thérèse Lafirme, a beautiful and resourceful Creole woman, is widowed at age thirty-two and left alone to run her Louisiana plantation. When Thérèse falls in love with David Hosmer, a divorced businessman, her strong moral and religious convictions make it impossible for her to accept his marriage proposal. Her determined rejection sets the two on a tumultuous path that involves Hosmer's former wife, Fanny. *At Fault* is both romantic and filled with stark realism-a love story that expands to address the complex problem of balancing personal happiness and social duty-set in the post-Reconstruction South against a backdrop of economic devastation and simmering racial tensions. Written at the beginning of her career, *At Fault* parallels Chopin's own life and introduces characters and themes that appear in her later works, including *The Awakening*.

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