
About the Cover



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Jessie Redmon Fauset published this photograph with her ‘My House and A Glimpse of My Life Therein’ in the July 1914 issue of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People’s *The Crisis* magazine. In it, a young African American woman – possibly Fauset herself – embodies the nineteenth-century medievalist style of the women depicted by pre-Raphaelite artists. In her ornate gown, head adorned with a flower garland, her hair in the braids with which the heroines of medieval romance are so often depicted, the photo’s subject descends a monumental staircase as if she is a medieval lady. Yet, she is obviously African American. Her features and skin tone suggest it. Her hair is dark instead of the golden color usually attributed to the ladies of medieval romance. She is at once a ghost of the nineteenth century and a modern, early 20th-century African American woman. W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Crisis*’s founder, wrote in 1903 that African Americans are ‘yet struggling in the eddies of the fifteenth’ century. The African American medievalist woman in the photograph also *played* in the eddies of the nineteenth.

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