



# False Gods

*Louis Auchincloss*

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## **False Gods** Louis Auchincloss

In this elegant collection of stories, Louis Auchincloss once again evokes the beguiling, complex world of New York society that he has made his own special literary landscape. Inspired by the colorful mosaic of ancient Greek myths, he has created six equally rich contemporary fables – six lives governed by false gods.

Hermes, or in Auchincloss's ironic interpretation, "god of the self-made man," is a Jewish lawyer who finds acceptance into WASP society only at greatest personal cost; Hephaestus is a bachelor designer of Palladian villas whose young bride, enamored of newfangled things, compels him to "go modern." In other stories, a former World War II naval officer, guided perhaps by the goddess Athene, escapes a sinking cruise ship by disguising himself as a woman; and a Catholic convert, distracted by the muse Polyhymnia, is torn between his priestly duties and his worldly social and artistic ambitions.

In every tale a unique moral sensibility holds sway, revealing how the pagan impulse may surface in the most unlikely and provocative situations, compromising even the noblest of spirits. Keenly insightful, flawlessly executed, *False Gods* is the work of a master storyteller, widely acclaimed as American society's most entertaining and intelligent critic.

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