



The Wings of the Dove

By Henry James



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Henry James (15 April 1843 – 28 February 1916) was an American-born writer who traveled Europe for much of his younger life. Born to a wealthy family that emphasized education, James was tutored by teachers from all over Europe during his adolescence and briefly attended Harvard Law School before deciding to concentrate on writing. **James is considered one of the key contributors to nineteenth century literary realism, and some of his best known novels include *The American*, *Daisy Miller*, and *The Portrait of a Lady*.**

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The Wings of the Dove By Henry James Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The Wings of the Dove is a classic example of Henry James's morality tales that play off the naiveté of an American protagonist abroad. In early-20th-century London, Kate Croy and Merton Densher are engaged in a passionate, clandestine love affair. Croy is desperately in love with Densher, who has all the qualities of a potentially excellent husband: he's handsome, witty, and idealistic--the one thing he lacks is money, which ultimately renders him unsuitable as a mate. By chance, Croy befriends a young American heiress, Milly Theale. When Croy discovers that Theale suffers from a mysterious and fatal malady, she hatches a plan that can give all three characters something that they want--at a price. Croy and Densher plan to accompany the young woman to Venice where Densher, according to Croy's design, will seduce the ailing heiress. The two hope that Theale will find love and happiness in her last days and--when she dies--will leave her fortune to Densher, so that he and Croy can live happily ever after. The scheme that at first develops as planned begins to founder when Theale discovers the pair's true motives shortly before her death. Densher struggles with unanticipated feelings of love for his new paramour, and his guilt may obstruct his ability to avail himself of Theale's gift. James deftly navigates the complexities and irony of such moral treachery in this stirring novel.

Review

"*The Wings of the Dove* represents the pinnacle of James's prose."—Louis Auchincloss

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Users Review

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