



The Beast in the Jungle (Xist Classics)

By Henry James



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Henry James' Greatest Short Fiction Achievement

“What had the man had, to make him by the loss of it so bleed and yet live? Something—and this reached him with a pang—that he, John Marcher, hadn’t; the proof of which was precisely John Marcher’s arid end. No passion had ever touched him, for this was what passion meant; he had survived and maundered and pined, but where had been his deep ravage?... The escape would have been to love her; then, then he would have lived.” - Henry James, The Beast in the Jungle and Other Stories

Like a beast in the jungle, protagonist John Marcher waits for some catastrophic event to happen letting life and love pass by. Eventually, he discovers that tragedy has already occurred: nobody can give his wasted time back. The other two stories, ‘The Jolly Corner’ and ‘The Altar of the Dead’ are another great examples of Henry James’ wonderful craft and knowledge of the human soul.

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The Beast in the Jungle (Xist Classics) By Henry James Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #504917 in eBooks
- Published on: 2015-09-04
- Released on: 2015-09-04
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Review

Short story by Henry James that first appeared in *The Better Sort* (1903). Despite its sluggish pace, implausible dialogue, and excessively ornate style, it is a suspenseful story of despair, with powerful images of fire, ice, and hunting. *The Beast in the Jungle* concerns John Marcher, a neurotic egoist obsessed with the lurking feeling that something incredible is to happen to him. This impending fate has a predatory quality, like "a crouching beast in the jungle." Consumed with anticipation and dread, Marcher is unable to reciprocate the love of his long-suffering companion, May Bartram. She comes to see his fate but is unable to make him understand it before she dies. While visiting her grave one year later, Marcher suddenly realizes that his terrible fate was precisely his inability to comprehend her love for him. -- *The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature*

From the Back Cover

Here are three superb stories by one of America's finest writers of fiction. Henry James is best known for his many brilliant novels, among them *The Bostonians*, *The Ambassadors*, *The Wings of the Dove*, *The Golden Bowl*, and his masterpiece, *Portrait of a Lady*. But he is deeply admired for his stories as well, which perhaps even more pointedly reveal the extraordinary subtleties of his art.

That art is nowhere more evident than in "The Beast in the Jungle," regarded by many as James's greatest achievement in short fiction. It is a gripping portrait of a man alienated from life and love, haunted and obsessed by his fears. James's uncanny ability to communicate the inner lives of his characters is also richly evident in "The Jolly Corner" and "The Altar of the Dead," two superbly crafted tales that explore the complex interlacings of loss, love, and the ever-present past in the lives of their protagonists.

About the Author

American author Henry James (1843–1916) spent most of his career in Europe and ultimately adopted British citizenship. A prolific writer of criticism, biography, and travel-related books and articles, James is known above all for his highly influential novels, which frequently explore the clash of Old and New World cultures.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Rebecca Burks:

The event that you get from *The Beast in the Jungle* (Xist Classics) is a more deep you excavating the information that hide into the words the more you get considering reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to know but *The Beast in the Jungle* (Xist Classics) giving you buzz feeling of reading. The author conveys their point in a number of way that can be understood by means of anyone who read it because the author of this guide is well-known enough. This specific book also makes your own vocabulary increase well. That makes it easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are

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Joyce Volz:

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