



The Real Thing and Other Stories

Henry James

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Illusion and love - two of James' favourite things - grin thorough this collection of funny and wicked tales. The illusion of social class, a favourite stamping ground for James, is explored in the glittering social comedy "The Real Thing", first published in 1892, in which an artist attempts vainly to capture the nature of aristocracy via painting what he takes to be 'real' members of that social group.

In "Broken Wings", the question of whether lovers ever settle down gets the James examination. Greville Fane gleefully teases the world of Barbara Cartland- type romantic fiction, and in "Four Meetings" we get a taste of that distant, slightly chilly, but extraordinary passion that Henry James perfected.

With his usual mix of femme fatales, self-deprecating writers and social climbers running riot around Europe, this collection provides some prime examples of James' extraordinary skill in creating complete worlds for the listener in snapshot glimpses.

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