



HENRY JAMES

The Wings of the Dove

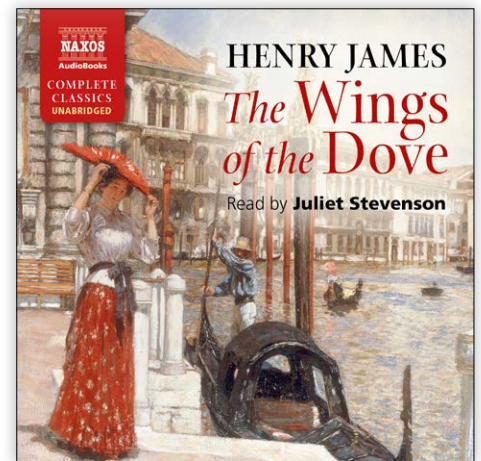
Read by **Juliet Stevenson**

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Milly Theale is a young, beautiful and fabulously wealthy American. When she arrives in London and meets the equally beautiful but impoverished Kate Croy, they form an intimate friendship. But nothing is as it seems: materialism, romance, self-delusion and ultimately fatal illness insidiously contaminate the glamorous social whirl.





Juliet Stevenson, one of the UK's leading actresses, has worked extensively for the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Royal National Theatre. She received an Olivier Award for her role in *Death and the Maiden* at the Royal Court, and a number of other awards for her work in the film *Truly, Madly, Deeply*. Other film credits include *The Trial*, *Drowning by Numbers* and *Emma*. For Naxos AudioBooks she has recorded *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Persuasion*, *Stories from Shakespeare*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Bliss and Other Stories*, *The Road Home*, *Middlemarch* and many more.





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1	1-1	The Wings of the Dove	11:13
2	1-2	Life had met him so...	11:38
3	1-3	'I should have thought you might perhaps guess.'	11:45
4	1-4	She looked about her and picked up her parasol.	11:41
5	1-5	Chapter 2	12:11
6	1-6	It wasn't in truth, however...	11:07
7	2-1	It was after the children's dinner...	8:30
8	2-2	'Your ideas are the more striking,' Kate returned...	8:50
9	2-3	Book Second	12:32
10	2-4	They had found themselves regarding...	11:19
11	2-5	Kate took one of her walks with Densher...	12:03
12	2-6	'The tune,' she exclaimed...	10:02
13	2-7	Densher took this in with marked but generous...	10:33
14	3-1	Chapter 2	10:16
15	3-2	He recognized at the end of ten minutes...	10:00
16	3-3	He afterwards felt that if she hadn't absolutely...	10:24
17	3-4	He had given her indeed, she made no scruple...	10:27
18	3-5	The beauty was in everything...	10:49
19	3-6	Book Third	11:34
20	4-1	For the figure to which these questions...	12:16
21	4-2	She had arts and idiosyncrasies...	11:54
22	4-3	Her young friend had in a sublime degree...	11:33



23	4-4	Chapter 2	10:18
24	4-5	Milly had for the third time her air...	11:00
25	4-6	She presently put it that, at any rate...	8:13
26	5-1	Book Fourth	11:05
27	5-2	He threw out the question, which seemed large...	11:52
28	5-3	Milly followed this...	10:32
29	5-4	She neglected his question for a little...	11:10
30	5-5	Chapter 2	13:51
31	5-6	It was meanwhile a pretty part...	13:31
32	6-1	These were fine facilities...	4:43
33	6-2	Chapter 3	10:14
34	6-3	It would have taken but another free moment...	10:29
35	6-4	'She wished me, if I cared for Kate, to know,'...	10:03
36	6-5	Milly looked at her as if she were almost...	10:22
37	6-6	Book Fifth	20:15
38	6-7	Chapter 2	5:46
39	7-1	It was all the while for Milly...	10:50
40	7-2	Thus it was that, aloft there in the great gilded...	8:55
41	7-3	Chapter 3	11:16
42	7-4	It was exactly as if, in the forty-eight hours...	12:02
43	7-5	It put forward the bold idea...	10:40
44	7-6	Chapter 4	14:34



45	8-1	Milly had her rent to pay...	13:44
46	8-2	Chapter 5	12:12
47	8-3	For Mrs Lowder also moreover...	12:49
48	8-4	Chapter 6	8:54
49	8-5	The odd thing furthermore...	9:12
50	8-6	Really at last, thus, it had been too much...	8:55
51	9-1	Chapter 7	11:04
52	9-2	This was a gentleman in the middle of the place...	8:19
53	9-3	The help was fairly rendered before they left...	12:36
54	9-4	Book Sixth	12:27
55	9-5	It would have been open to her, no doubt...	13:12
56	10-1	Chapter 2	10:37
57	10-2	He had really at this to make out a little...	10:04
58	10-3	Kate so possessed her facts, as it were...	9:58
59	10-4	Chapter 3	9:46
60	10-5	The drama, at all events...	11:17
61	10-6	He asked nothing better.	10:38
62	11-1	Chapter 4	11:14
63	11-2	'I want,' said the girl...	11:11
64	11-3	She went with him a few steps...	9:41
65	11-4	'Then how could she suppose you weren't...?'	12:30
66	11-5	Chapter 5	8:59
67	11-6	The question the girl had quickly disposed of...	9:49
68	11-7	At the same time, while many things in quick...	8:53
69	12-1	'Ah then you will return?'	12:54
70	12-2	Thus ingeniously discriminating...	12:57
71	12-3	Book Seventh	11:14
72	12-4	Milly thought.	11:44
73	12-5	'I asked nothing,' said poor Susie...	11:43
74	12-6	Susie faced this new duty.	11:04
75	13-1	Chapter 2	11:13
76	13-2	The only obstacle to reciprocity with him...	10:39
77	13-3	Chapter 3	9:49
78	13-4	Mrs Lowder's success and Kate's...	9:58
79	13-5	She was out of it at present, for some reason...	11:29
80	13-6	Chapter 4	8:16
81	13-7	If he could only be touched enough...	7:49
82	14-1	'What is it you want to know?'	9:27
83	14-2	By this time she had turned from their window...	9:16
84	14-3	Well, he showed how beautifully he could take it...	10:30
85	14-4	Book Eighth	11:23



86	14-5	It was thanks to her pure talent for life...	10:08
87	14-6	That came up in all connexions...	10:50
88	15-1	Chapter 2	10:10
89	15-2	She wished not to have spoiled his morning...	9:49
90	15-3	There were moments again...	10:56
91	15-4	Chapter 3	10:56
92	15-5	But she understood in perfection...	11:59
93	15-6	Much as the change did for the value...	9:58
94	15-7	As she saw herself, suddenly, he saw her...	9:25
95	16-1	Densher for an instant, but only for an instant...	7:04
96	16-2	It wasn't till afterwards that, going back to it...	10:34
97	16-3	Book Ninth	10:22
98	16-4	To go with her was the thing...	11:08
99	16-5	She had for twenty seconds an exquisite pale...	10:50
100	16-6	Chapter 2	9:34
101	16-7	He did so then, daily, for twenty days...	13:31
102	17-1	His eye had caught a face within the café...	8:51
103	17-2	The day or two passed...	7:18
104	17-3	Chapter 3	11:58
105	17-4	His friend, after all, helped him...	12:37
106	17-5	More and more, for the last five minutes...	12:29
107	17-6	'I've given her none that hasn't been decently...'	10:45
108	18-1	Chapter 4	10:57
109	18-2	The facts of physical suffering, of incurable pain...	9:17
110	18-3	The result of it was the oddest consciousness...	11:19
111	18-4	Book Tenth	10:06
112	18-5	She gave him her quietest attention...	9:53
113	18-6	It was perhaps not as going into it...	12:33
114	18-7	'Oh!' said Kate.	9:46
115	19-1	Chapter 2	9:37
116	19-2	Densher had said nothing about his appreciation...	13:11
117	19-3	Kate came at last by the way he had thought...	11:47
118	19-4	Chapter 3	11:34
119	19-5	It rather racked him, but he tried to receive it...	12:11
120	19-6	Chapter 4	13:47
121	20-1	She had the air of thinking what it then might be.	13:18
122	20-2	Chapter 5	11:58
123	20-3	He only for a minute looked out in silence...	11:19
124	20-4	Chapter 6	12:21
125	20-5	Yet all the while too the tension had its charm...	11:38
126	20-6	She was struck – it showed in her face...	12:33

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HENRY JAMES

The Wings of the Dove

Henry James (1843–1916) was born in New York, the son of Henry James senior, a distinguished American philosopher. He was given a liberal education which included prolonged visits to Europe, and when he left Harvard he felt compelled to leave America for Europe, a continent which for him offered a maturity and sophistication which he felt was missing in his homeland and which, in his view, was crucial for nurturing the highest form of literature. He lived in Italy, France and Britain, but in 1876 he settled permanently in Britain, and in 1915 he became a British citizen.

Henry James's life spanned a time of vast literary change. He was born into the age of Romanticism when Wordsworth was Poet Laureate, and yet by the time he died he was very much a twentieth-century writer and, stylistically, was anticipating the modernist movement.

Henry James wrote twenty-one novels, which fall broadly into three phases. The first is characterised by *Roderick Hudson* (1876). This book deals with themes that were to preoccupy James for the whole of his career: the impact of a sophisticated European ethos on a naïve American, and the insidious nature of evil. It was written as a traditional narrative with a certain picturesqueness of style. The second phase, and in the view of many critics his most accomplished, is best characterised by *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). The same themes are in play but stylistically James shows a maturity and complexity of style which combine observable events with inward experience.

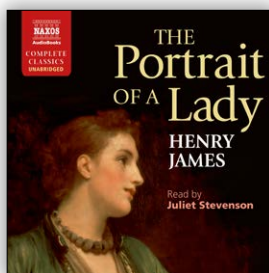
For a time James tried his hand as a playwright, but the interior nature of his writing was not suited to the demands of theatre. In 1895 one of his plays, *Guy Domville*, failed so miserably that he determined to give up playwriting and use what he had learnt to strengthen his novels.

It is to this third phase of writing that *The Wings of the Dove* (1902) belongs, together with *The Ambassadors* (1903) and *The Golden Bowl* (1904). Now James began to experiment with a much more labyrinthine style. He tried to express thoughts which are seldom precise, and to investigate motives which are often ambiguous, even to the protagonists. His sentences became longer, with more and more reservations and qualifications. James often dictated his work and therefore wrote as he spoke, with complex extenuated sentences. Thomas Hardy called them 'infinite sentences'; this would suggest a baggy superfluity, but in fact James was aiming for a 'deep-breathing economy'.

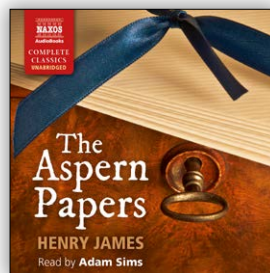
In *The Wings of the Dove* James deals with his traditional themes. The wealthy, naïve American, Milly, is used and manipulated by Kate Croy and her vacillating lover, Merton Densher. But their duplicity is subtle, not always really understood even by themselves, and the novel deals primarily with the power of self-deception and the insidious nature of materialism. James's great skill was in withholding frames of reference, whether moral, spatial, temporal or psychological. This can at times make for a challenging read, but the end result is a book of profound insight into the human psyche.

Notes by Heather Godwin

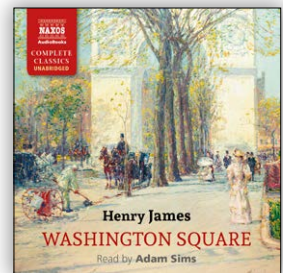
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