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# Death In Venice: And Seven Other Stories



## Synopsis

Eight complex stories illustrative of the author's belief that "a story must tell itself," highlighted by the high art style of the famous title novella.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The long novels of Thomas Mann can prove challenging, not unlike those of Henry James. Fortunately, this varied collection - *Death in Venice* and *Seven Other Stories* - offers an easier way to become acquainted with Mann's intellectual, psychologically complex literature. Thomas Mann's lengthy sentences and complex grammatical structures markedly complicate the task of translation. H. T. Lowe-Porter's translation is considered the most accessible version, although at the expense of subdividing many of Mann's sentences. (For comparison with an excellent literal version, look at Stanley Appelbaum's translation of *Death in Venice*, Dover Publications, 1995). *Death in Venice* and *Seven Other Stories* was first published by Vintage Books in 1954. My edition was printed by Vintage International in 1989; it has neither an introduction nor explanatory notes. *Death in Venice* (1911): While vacationing in Venice, the aging, highly respected author Gustave Ashenbach becomes mesmerized by a young boy staying at the seashore with his Polish aristocratic family. Although intellectually aware of his growing obsession, Ashenbach is unable to break away. This somber portrayal of a troubled man is a masterpiece of subtle nuances that illustrates Thomas Mann's ability to create layers of meaning. *Tonio Kroger* (1903) is perhaps more biographical as it explores a writer's internal conflict between his desire to be accepted, that is to fit in to a bourgeois

life, and his contradictory need to follow his artistic temperament wherever it might lead him. *Mario and the Magician* (1929) is more explicitly political, depicting in the guise of an unscrupulous hypnotist a Mussolini-like character. The ending of this intriguing account is a surprise.

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