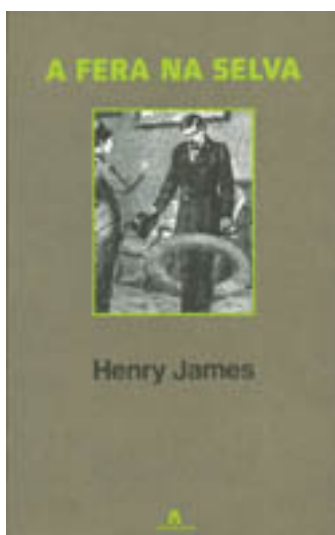

Henry James

A Fera na Selva



Title: A Fera na Selva

Author: Henry James

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Description

John Marcher não se lembrava, quando reencontrou casualmente May Bartram, que anos antes, num dia de tremendo calor em Sorrento, lhe havia contado o maior segredo da sua vida. Assim, e com exceção de si próprio, ela era a única pessoa no mundo a saber que algo terrível estava para acontecer na sua vida, algo que o poderia mudar para sempre, “qualquer coisa que se preparava para lhe sair ao caminho, como uma fera pronta a formar o salto na selva”.

Para John Marcher, “pouco importava que a fera estivesse destinada a matá-lo ou a morrer. O certo era o salto inevitável da criatura”. Por isso, e apesar da intimidade profunda que unia John a May, nunca lhe ocorreu a possibilidade de se apaixonar, ou mesmo de se casarem, visto que, segundo a moral da sua história, “um cavalheiro não levava uma senhora à caça ao tigre”.

A Fera na Selva é o retrato prodigioso de um “homem a quem nada neste mundo havia de acontecer”, da sua trágica incapacidade para enfrentar dilemas e realizar opções, para reconhecer os seus sentimentos e os de outras pessoas.

Insightful reviews

Melissa: If only all bachelors aged 26 and older would read this...the world would be a different place indeed.

Casey Merritt: This is a story that is essentially about nothing. I don't mean to say that all stories are somehow about nothing, I quite literally mean that this story is about nothing. It has a frame of course, because then it would not be a story, but the frame is that it is about a man, Marcher, who does nothing with his life. He believes that some great catastrophe will happen to him, and to avoid it he essentially stops living life. He feels passionate about nothing, and while he loves himself a great deal he abuses that love by locking it away. Marcher has a companion through out this ordeal, May Bartram, she states that she knows his secret. Miss Bartram uses Marcher, she watches his life go by waiting for the event to come. This story is long and tedious at best, and incredibly disappointing any other way. James male characters all seem similar after a while, they are often self-centered voyeurs looking in at other people enjoying their lives, but Marcher differs in that he is trying to look into to his own misery trying to find a reason he lives such an unfulfilled life.

Eric Byrnes: I have the suspicion that Henry James' writing will grow on me the more I've read of his oeuvre. My reading of "The Beast in the Jungle," initially tried my patience, as it seemed unnecessarily prolix with parentheticals, and self-indulgently self-analytical; by the end of the story I'd realized that this style was par for course and, in fact, intimately tied to the story's psychological plot and moral purpose.

I'd initially given this a two-star review but upgraded it to three when I considered how the very ending of the story tied the ornate and somewhat confusing spaghetti-network of thoughts into a seemly bow. One needs to consider this story as a tale told from the perspective of John

Marcher, a man whose very *modus vivendi* is to remain chronically stymied from living life, paralyzed with psychological fear of the vicissitudes of life itself. In my adjusted reckoning, the cumbersome parentheticals and the ornate language that seem to say so little ultimately said so much more by nature of their saying little in words. What those fearful, meandering, and excessive words of hand-wringing self-analysis spell out clearly is this: whatever misfortunes life may bring, if we spend life analyzing auguries of our uncertain future and hiding in the shadow of the impending doom of happenstance, we risk suffering the greatest misfortune of all. That greatest of misfortunes, James reminds us, is the realization that in fearing life we had never allowed ourselves to have truly lived. In that realization, all of our ornately tangled thoughts and theories, all of our fearful analyses of our once uncertain future become certain vanities in the perfect hindsight of our squandered past; we recognize them too late as our missed opportunities for living life. So, having finished the story, I'd have to say that, "The Beast in the Jungle," succeeds not in spite of its messily ornate, yet vapid, prose style but very much due to it, for it functions in underscoring the vast emptiness of a life experienced only tentatively and marked by a frenetic thought process ruled by fear and avoidance.

The moral of this story appears in other works by Henry James—this doesn't surprise me as the ethos is as clear as it is simple, and perhaps for this reason it's all too easily ignored by many as platitudinous advice—and James expresses it succinctly in his novel *The Ambassadors*: "Live all you can: it's a mistake not to. It doesn't matter what you do in particular, so long as you have had your life. If you haven't had that, what have you had?" What one should take away from reading "The Beast in the Jungle" was beautifully and simply expressed by a present-day writer of a more colloquial bent: "Get busy living, or get busy dying."

Ilbauer: Spoilers: such a lot of fluffy phrases to claim so little. I completely loved the precis I learn afterwards, that took one minute to provide an explanation for this novella. no longer that i am generally opposed to phrases being additional for flair, yet this used to be boooooing!! it might probably summed up like this: This dude met a woman and advised her that he constantly anxious that anything large and terrible used to be going to occur to him in his existence . He was once all approximately himself and did not discover her as a possible partner, yet as a confidant. They observed the capability terrible factor for years. She dies. he is unhappy he does not have a confidant. on the cemetery he sees a guy who's horribly grieving approximately an individual and it happens to the fellow that the terrible factor in his existence was once that he did not love somebody or whatever passionately. ethical of the story?: Fall in love together with your confidant rather than being a self vital asshat.

(9 3/4) Gerasimos Kyritsis: the idea that was once attention-grabbing and that i loved how unlikable either one of the characters were, but, within the end, the stiff, over-done writing made the prose tremendous tough to read. i would not have entire it if i did not need to learn it for school.

Mike Puma: Briefly; it's a novella after all. Apparently, sufficient time had lapsed after examining Proustite's superb assessment and Lee's (perhaps, as a result of excellent news of his new daughter) and Jesse's, that I'd thoroughly forgotten the story/novella's subtext. All good and good. What remained used to be seeing 3 reports for a quick Henry James title, and it used to

be a quick name i used to be in desire of; i'll compensate for my 2013 analyzing goal, i'm going to dammit. So, while i began examining this story, it wasn't lengthy sooner than i used to be thinking: this guy's gay—he would possibly not admit to it, or consider capable of act on it, yet there should be no doubt, this guy's gay. And all i actually anticipated was once a pleasant night with James' cozy, appealing language. Proustite pointed out an enticing essay by way of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick from Epistemology of the Closet; it's worthy checking out, if you're —academic, uninspired, yet worthwhile. here. My advice, learn the essay after analyzing the novella and maintain an excellent dictionary at hand. Four stars, which i'd revisit and revise upwardly, yet dammit, i'm maintaining again as the tale pursued a course i assumed predictable.

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