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HENRY JAMES

THE TURN OF THE SCREW

AND OTHER GHOST STORIES

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SERIES ADVISOR: PHILIP HORNE

HENRY JAMES was born in 1843 in Washington Place, New York, of Scottish and Irish ancestry. His father was a prominent theologian and philosopher and his elder brother, William, also became famous as a philosopher. James attended schools in New York and later in London, Paris and Geneva, before briefly entering the Law School at Harvard in 1862. In 1864 he began to contribute reviews and short stories to American journals. He visited Europe twice as an adult before moving to Paris in 1875, where he met Flaubert, Turgenev and other literary figures. However, after a year he moved to London, where he met with such success in society that he confessed to accepting 107 invitations in the winter of 1878–9 alone. In 1898 he left London and went to live at Lamb House, Rye, Sussex. Henry James became a naturalized British citizen in 1915, and was awarded the Order of Merit in 1916, shortly before his death in February of that year.

In addition to many short stories, plays, books of criticism, biography and autobiography, and much travel writing, he wrote some twenty novels, the first of which, *Watch and Ward*, appeared serially in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1871. His novella 'Daisy Miller' (1878) established him as a literary figure on both sides of the Atlantic. Other novels include *Roderick Hudson* (1875), *The American* (1877), *The Europeans* (1878), *Washington Square* (1880), *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), *The Bostonians* (1886), *The Princess Casamassima* (1886), *The Tragic Muse* (1890), *The Spoils of Poynton* (1897), *What Maisie Knew* (1897), *The Awkward Age* (1899), *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903) and *The Golden Bowl* (1904).

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HENRY JAMES

The Turn of the Screw and Other Ghost Stories

Edited and with an Introduction and Notes by
SUSIE BOYT

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Contents

THE TURN OF THE SCREW AND OTHER GHOST STORIES

Chronology

1843 *15 April*: Henry James born at 21 Washington Place in New York City, second of five children of Henry James (1811–82), speculative theologian and social thinker, whose strict entrepreneur father had amassed wealth estimated at $3 million, one of the top ten American fortunes of his time, and his wife Mary (1810–82), daughter of James Walsh, a New York cotton merchant of Scottish origin.

1843–5 Accompanies parents to Paris and London.

1845–7 James family returns to USA and settles in Albany, New York.

1847–55 Family settles in New York City; HJ taught by tutors and in private schools.

1855–8 Family travels in Europe: Geneva, London, Paris, Boulogne-sur-Mer. Returns to USA and settles in Newport, Rhode Island.

1859–60 Family in Europe again: HJ attends scientific school, then the Academy (later the University) in Geneva. Learns German in Bonn.

September 1860: Family returns to Newport. HJ makes friends with future critic T. S. Perry (who records that HJ 'was continually writing stories, mainly of a romantic kind') and artist John La Farge.

1861–3 Injures his back helping to extinguish a fire in Newport and is exempted from military service in American Civil War (1861–5).

Autumn 1862: Enters Harvard Law School for a term. Begins to send stories to magazines.

1864 *February*: First short story, 'A Tragedy of Error', published anonymously in *Continental Monthly*.

May: Family moves to 13 Ashburton Place, Boston, Massachusetts.

October: Unsigned review published in *North American Review*.

1865 *March*: First signed tale, 'The Story of a Year', appears in *Atlantic Monthly*. HJ's criticism published in first number of the *Nation* (New York).

1866–8 Continues reviewing and writing stories.

Summer 1866: W. D. Howells, novelist, critic and influential editor, becomes a friend.

November 1866: Family moves to 20 Quincy Street, beside Harvard Yard, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

1869 Travels for his health to England, where he meets John Ruskin, William Morris, Charles Darwin and George Eliot; also visits Switzerland and Italy.

1870 *March*: Death in USA of his much-loved cousin Minny Temple.

May: HJ, still unwell, is reluctantly back in Cambridge.

1871 *August–December*: First short novel, *Watch and Ward*, serialized in *Atlantic Monthly*.

1872–4 Accompanies invalid sister Alice and aunt Catherine Walsh ('Aunt Kate') to Europe in May. Writes travel pieces for the *Nation*. Between October 1872 and September 1874 spends periods of time in Paris, Rome, Switzerland, Homburg and Italy without his family.

Spring 1874: Begins first long novel, *Roderick Hudson*, in Florence.

September 1874: Returns to USA.

1875 *January*: Publishes *A Passionate Pilgrim, and Other Tales*, his first work to appear in book form. It is followed by *Transatlantic Sketches* (travel pieces) and then by *Roderick Hudson* in November. Spends six months in New York City (111 East 25th Street), then three in Cambridge.

11 November: Arrives at 29 rue de Luxembourg, Paris, as correspondent for the *New York Tribune*.

December: Begins new novel, *The American*.

1876 Meets Gustave Flaubert, Ivan Turgenev, Edmond de Goncourt, Alphonse Daudet, Guy de Maupassant and Émile Zola.

December: Moves to London and settles at 3 Bolton Street, just off Piccadilly.

1877 Visits Paris, Florence and Rome.

May: *The American* is published.

1878 Meets William Gladstone, Alfred Tennyson and Robert Browning.

February: *French Poets and Novelists* (collection of essays), is the first book HJ publishes in London.

July: 'Daisy Miller' (novella) serialized in *The Cornhill Magazine*; in November *Harper's* publish it in the USA, establishing HJ's reputation on both sides of the Atlantic.

September: Publishes *The Europeans* (novel).

1879 *December*: Publishes *Confidence* (novel) and *Hawthorne* (critical study).

1880 *December*: Publishes *Washington Square* (novel).

1881 *October*: Returns to USA; visits Cambridge.

November: Publishes *The Portrait of a Lady* (novel).

1882 *January*: Death of mother. Visits New York and Washington, DC.

May: Travels back to England but returns to USA on death of father in December.

1883 *Summer*: Returns to London.

November: Fourteen-volume collected edition of fiction published by Macmillan.

December: Publishes *Portraits of Places* (travel writings).

1884 Sister Alice moves to London and settles near HJ.

September: Publishes *A Little Tour in France* (travel writings) and *Tales of Three Cities*; his important artistic statement 'The Art of Fiction' appears in *Longman's Magazine*. Becomes a friend of R. L. Stevenson and Edmund Gosse. Writes to his American friend Grace Norton: 'I shall never marry . . . I am both happy enough and miserable enough, as it is.'

1885–6 Publishes two serial novels, *The Bostonians* and *The Princess Casamassima*.

6 March 1886: Moves into flat at 34 De Vere Gardens.

1887 *Spring and summer*: Visits Florence and Venice. Continues friendship (begun in 1880) with American novelist Constance Fenimore Woolson.

1888 Publishes *The Reverberator* (novel), 'The Aspern Papers' (novella) and *Partial Portraits* (criticism).

1889 *A London Life* (collection of tales) published.

1890 *The Tragic Muse* (novel) published.

1891 HJ's dramatization of *The American* has a short run in the provinces and London.

1892 *February*: Publishes *The Lesson of the Master* (story collection).

March: Death of Alice James in London.

1893 Three volumes of tales published: *The Real Thing* (March), *The Private Life* (June), *The Wheel of Time* (September).

1894 Deaths of Constance Fenimore Woolson and R. L. Stevenson.

1895 *5 January*: *Guy Domville* (play) is greeted by boos and applause on its premiere at St James's Theatre; HJ abandons playwriting for many years. Visits Ireland. Takes up cycling. Publishes two volumes of tales, *Terminations* (May) and *Embarrassments* (June).

1896 Publishes *The Other House* (novel).

1897 Two novels, *The Spoils of Poynton* and *What Maisie Knew*, published.

February: Starts dictating, due to wrist problems.

September: Takes lease on Lamb House, Rye, Sussex.

1898 *June*: Moves into Lamb House. Sussex neighbours include the writers Joseph Conrad, H. G. Wells and Ford Madox Hueffer (Ford).

August: Publishes *In the Cage* (short novel).

October: 'The Turn of the Screw', ghost story included in *The Two Magics*, proves his most popular work since 'Daisy Miller'.

1899 *April*: *The Awkward Age* (novel) published.

August: Buys the freehold of Lamb House.

1900 Shaves off his beard.

August: Publishes *The Soft Side* (collection of tales). Friendship with American novelist Edith Wharton develops.

1901 *February*: Publishes *The Sacred Fount* (novel).

1902 *August*: Publishes *The Wings of the Dove* (novel).

1903 *February*: Publishes *The Better Sort* (collection of tales).

September: Publishes *The Ambassadors* (novel).

October: Publishes *William Wetmore Story and his Friends* (biography).

1904 *August*: Sails to USA, his first visit for twenty-one years. Travels to New England, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, the South, St Louis, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

November: Publishes *The Golden Bowl* (novel).

1905 *January*: Is President Theodore Roosevelt's guest at the White House. Elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

July: Back in Lamb House, begins revising works for the New York Edition of *The Novels and Tales of Henry James*.

October: Publishes *English Hours* (travel essays).

1906–8 Selects, arranges, writes prefaces and has illustrations made for New York Edition (published 1907–9, twenty-four volumes).

1907 *January*: Publishes *The American Scene* (travel essays).

1908 *March*: *The High Bid* (play) produced at Edinburgh.

1909 *October*: Publishes *Italian Hours* (travel essays). Health problems.

1910 *August*: Travels to USA with brother William, who dies a week after their return.

October: Publishes *The Finer Grain* (collection of tales).

1911 *August*: Returns to England.

October: Publishes *The Outcry* (novel adapted from play). Begins work on autobiography.

1912 *June*: Receives honorary doctorate from Oxford University.

October: Takes flat at 21 Carlyle Mansions, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea; suffers from shingles.

1913 *March*: Publishes *A Small Boy and Others* (first volume of autobiography). Portrait painted by John Singer Sargent for seventieth birthday.

1914 *March*: Publishes *Notes of a Son and Brother* (second volume of autobiography).

August: Outbreak of First World War; HJ becomes passionately engaged with the British cause and helps Belgian refugees and wounded soldiers.

October: Publishes *Notes on Novelists* (criticism).

1915 Is made honorary president of the American Volunteer Motor Ambulance Corps.

July: Becomes a British citizen. Writes essays about the war (collected in *Within the Rim* (1919)) and the Preface to *Letters from America* (1916) by the poet Rupert Brooke, who had died the previous year.

2 *December*: Suffers a stroke.

1916 Awarded the Order of Merit in New Year Honours.

28 February: Dies. After his funeral in Chelsea Old Church, his ashes are smuggled back to America by sister-in-law and buried in the family plot in Cambridge.

Philip Horne, 2017

Introduction

First-time readers should be aware that details of the plots are revealed in this Introduction.

Was Henry James really interested in ghosts? In ghosts, simply and purely, as and for themselves? Ghosts seem too crude a matter for a writer whose reputation is founded on a commitment to rendering, with truth and subtlety, the complete landscape of human consciousness. James's genius for encompassing the fine detail of being makes him seem more acute-minded, more attached to scrutiny and scruples than supernatural concerns and sensational occurrences could ever bear. He might be thought both too worldly and too innocent for ghosts. For there is a crassness and bluntness to the supernatural and to horror; ghosts can lend an ugly, unearned swagger to a story, and the vagueness of spirits and their simple motivation or lack of agency may seem wholly at odds with the rigour and the conscientiousness of James's versions of consciousness.

Besides, what sectors of James's sphere of interest do ghosts occupy or pass through? Are ghosts clever? Do they care about fine feelings and fine furniture? Does money mean a great deal to them? Did any ghost ever mind how bad the shops of Venice are, or suffer dreadfully with its digestion, or gaze out in a Piccadilly direction and see an evening six parties deep? Are ghosts' motives – misery, revenge, heart-break – too low and crass for a writer of James's stature?

Do ghosts exercise themselves over how to exist fully in the world without taking on any of the taint that the word 'worldly' carries? Can ghosts be ground in the very mill of the conventional? Are ghosts only really of interest to James because of the stimuli and provocation they present to the human nervous system?

'The supernatural story, the subject wrought in fantasy, is not the *class* of fiction I myself most cherish,'[1] James wrote, as if to break the news to ghosts gently. 'Shameless pot-boiler',[2] '*jeu d'esprit*'[3] and 'that wanton little Tale',[4] was how James variously described 'The Turn of the Screw', as well as 'a poor little pot-boiling study of nothing at all.'[5] It was as though at times he felt bashful in relation to his best ghost-work, or felt he ought to appear so. In the mid-twentieth century, F. R. Leavis's final verdict on 'The Turn of the Screw', that it was a 'non-significant thriller, done, nevertheless, with the subtlety of the great master', stemmed from a belief that there was nothing 'ponderable' about the tale, nothing deeper than the 'reek' of 'Evil' that James refers to in his Preface.[6] Yet in a letter to Hendrik Andersen in 1906, James thickened the plot by writing that the expression 'pot-boiler' could represent 'in the lives of all artists, some of the most beautiful things ever done by them.'[7] Oh!

Certainly, supernatural concerns and sensational content figured in James's writing throughout his career. He was committed to the 'dear old sacred terror', returning to it frequently. He maintained a lifelong interest in paranormal phenomena, attending meetings at the Society for Psychical Research, where his brother William held high office. James was friendly with, and corresponded with, its more prominent members, such as F. W. H. Myers and Edmund Gurney, and there are references to the Society and its work in his letters and notebooks. 'I see ghosts everywhere,' James wrote in a letter to Francis Boott on 11 October 1895,[8] and it cannot be denied. James is haunted by them. It is true to say, however, that the ghosts in his ghost stories are not always the best things about them. It is sometimes hard for ghosts to match the calibre of the scenes they haunt. In tales such as 'The Romance of Certain Old Clothes', 'The Last of the Valerii' or 'Owen Wingrave', the supernatural elements occasionally seem beneath James.

'Owen Wingrave' is a small masterpiece in which the beliefs and traditions of a proud and brutal military family harden in the face of the complete lack of desire in its most able son for a career as a soldier. The characters are complex and the

crisis of Owen's pacifist principles is richly drawn and deeply felt. Spencer Coyle, the man in charge of preparing young Owen for Sandhurst, is shocked and disappointed by Owen's turn of mind, but he also cannot help looking at the Wingrave family and thinking 'that the boy was the best of them'. Yet the impact of discovering that Owen's great-great-grandfather once killed his own child in anger, or that Owen's living relatives talk of his pacifist scruples 'as you wouldn't talk of a cannibal's god', even the sternly disapproving atmosphere of the family portraits on the stair, all these moments are graver, stranger and more profound than the passages concerning the vengeful ghost. Like the elements of revenge in Jacobean revenge tragedy, the ghostly parts of James's stories now and then seem their least appealing aspect. Virginia Woolf said of 'Owen Wingrave', 'The catastrophe has not the right relations to what has gone before', and I think there is something in that.[9] The ghosts aren't necessarily needed, or rather, they're already there.

In the eight stories that form this volume, the range of ghosts, the play and the menace of ghosts and their meaning, is broad and varying. Ghosts can provide companionship and excitement, they can punish and terrify. They can provoke bouts of rivalry, they can murder, they can push a fellow to the brink of madness, and they can also embody the complexities of a path not taken. They can be courtly. They can serve as a premonition of an imminent death. They can judge, convict and condemn.

Ghosts in James's stories and wider fiction are often catalysts, appearing at transitional times. Returning to his former home after a third of a century 'ready to climb ladders, to walk the plank, to handle materials and look wise about them', the hero of 'The Jolly Corner', Spencer Brydon, might well have felt dismayed *not* to have met with some kind of ghostly visitation, for the situation absolutely requires one. Looking back over the life he might have led he almost psychoanalyses an alternative ghost-self into being. He sees 'the impalpable ashes of his long-extinct youth, afloat in the air like microscopic motes' and later he 'found all things come back to the question

of what he personally might have been, how he might have led his life and "turned out" '.

The shadowy figure of a ghost, incomprehensible and blurred at its edges, helps some of James's more untried characters spring sharply into focus. Ghosts can be a spur to heroism. If happiness comes from difficulties overcome, ghosts can provide these difficulties in spades. In 'The Turn of the Screw', the spectral figures provide opportunities for kindness, professional conscientiousness, gallantry followed by sainthood if not deification, as the fraught governess rouses herself to rescue the children she believes are morally and physically endangered. Looking after children and all the 'grey prose' that might involve would never have been enough for this young woman.

Ghosts can be a mark of distinction for those who experience them, evidence of fine-grained sensibility. In 'Sir Edmund Orme', seeing the ghost is a proof of being in love. In 'The Friends of the Friends', the lady and gentleman who both separately see ghostly visions of a parent at the time these parents die are held to inhabit a higher plane than the rest of their circle. It is a sign of their refined consciousness. According to Ralph Touchett in *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), the Gardencourt ghost appears to those who have lived to 'suffer enough'.

More prosaically and humorously in 'The Third Person', the Frush cousins' ghost brings excitement and the promise of adventure, glamour even, lifting otherwise monochrome lives:

> 'He's young,' she added.
> 'But he's *bad*!' said Miss Susan.
> 'He's handsome! . . . Splendidly.'
> ' "Splendidly"!'

Neither lady, we feel, has ever quite had a conversation like that before about a man.

Ghosts, and the meanings that they have, can also change during the course of a story. Later in 'The Third Person', the ghost of the cousins' long-lost convicted smuggling ancestor inhabits many different personas as the pair get to know him. Initially he frightens as an intruder would, but jealousy, for

Miss Amy, follows swiftly in fear's wake: 'Why, she [Miss Amy] afterwards asked herself in secret, should the restless spirit of a dead adventurer have addressed itself, in its trouble, to such a person as her queer, quaint, inefficient housemate?' Yet despite setting these cousins up as rivals for his attention, the ghost of Cuthbert Frush brings his kinsfolk closer. He gives them a joint interest in the way a charming niece might in a Jane Austen novel; he is their weather, their politics, their news. When the cousins decide that the ghost has outstayed his welcome, is beginning to be a headache and a bore, something to be well rid of, they enjoy a game of working out what that 'well' might signify. For a brief spell the tale becomes a detective story – the ghost has given them intrepid work to fill their days. The ghost of Cuthbert Frush casts a flattering light on the old cousins, allowing them to appear to each other as characters from a book or, better still, a play. 'There had been something hitherto wanting, they felt, to their small state and importance; it was present now, and they were as handsomely conscious of it as if they had previously missed it.' The dead man brings the cousins something valuable in the extreme – more life. He turns these two kinsfolk who keep different hours and have little in common into something they weren't quite before his arrival – a family. They will be talking about him for the rest of their lives.

The more you look for ghosts or hints of ghosts – ghosts of ghosts – in James's body of work, the larger, the more essential, the more over-arching they appear. In his 1910 essay 'Is There a Life After Death?' James linked the thoroughness of his artistic methods to the sublime, to something spiritual and unknowable. 'I deal with being, I invoke and evoke, I figure and represent, I seize and fix, as many phases and aspects and conceptions of it as my infirm hand allows me strength for; and in so doing I find myself – I can't express it otherwise – in communication with *sources* . . .' Later he continues, 'in proportion as we do curiously and lovingly, yearningly and irrepressibly, interrogate and liberate, try and test and explore, our general productive and, as we like conveniently to say, creative

awareness of things . . . in that proportion does our function strike us as establishing sublime relations.'[10] In fiction that is partly devoted to uncovering, monitoring and weighing the starts and false starts, the pathways and hiding places of being, what due is to be paid to the sides of consciousness that resist or retreat from being known? How can one best represent this other side, which may refuse to be prised open, for it contains the unknowable, the secret, the bewildering? Is one answer to this question ghosts?

And if actual ghosts make one recoil slightly, not necessarily from fear but for artistic reasons or matters of taste, if you take a sidestep and ask what is more interesting to James (and to me) than the things that haunt people, the answer comes back 'Nothing!' The mute call from the past, acutely felt; loss made vivid in the present; words unuttered striking another character with full force; the smarting of old or freshly realized error . . . If we allow the ghostliness of these typical Jamesian experiences – of health shot through, of grief, of entrenched family history; of regret – then we, like James, must see ghosts everywhere too.

Before looking at James's ghostly masterpiece 'The Turn of the Screw' in detail, I want to draw attention to broader ideas of hauntings in two short novels James wrote about the same time: *What Maisie Knew*, which appeared the year before 'The Turn of the Screw', in 1897, and *The Spoils of Poynton*, which first appeared in serial form as *The Old Things* the year before that. There is a moving passage in *What Maisie Knew* when Maisie is walking in Kensington Gardens with her stepfather Sir Claude and unexpectedly happens upon her mother Ida. Ida is meant to be playing in a billiards tournament 'at Brussels', but here she is in the park very much 'with' a man, a man unknown to Maisie and her stepfather.

> 'My own child,' Ida murmured in a voice – a voice of sudden confused tenderness – that it seemed to her she heard for the first time. She wavered but an instant, thrilled with the first direct appeal, as distinguished from the mere maternal pull, she had

> ever had from lips that, even in the old vociferous years, had always been sharp. The next moment she was on her mother's breast, where, amid a wilderness of trinkets, she felt as if she had suddenly been thrust, with a smash of glass, into a jeweller's shop-front, but only to be as suddenly ejected with a push and the brisk injunction: 'Now go to the Captain!'[11]

This scene, perhaps the most memorable in the book, achieves its power through the temporary collapse of Ida's habitual 'violent splendour'. The resultant 'sudden confused tenderness' conjures for a second Maisie's mother's near-opposite – a soft maternal spirit, much-missed. The oddness of the situation – Maisie's mother's being caught out, wholly unexpectedly – has allowed something uncanny to peep through her mother's fierce brilliance, by accident. There is a wildly hopeful aspect to this accident which suggests that such unprecedented softness is Maisie's mother at her most sincere, when all her defences are down. This is a child's idealized view, naturally. Still, a traditionally maternal note has found its way into her mother's tone at last, and this ghost of a tender mother makes all Ida's harshness, for an instant, look like a veneer. Is it possible her mother might want her or better still need her? This is cause for high celebration. Maisie, briefly, is overjoyed. The vision is sustaining – only then to be forcibly knocked out of Maisie almost as soon as it has arisen. She is punished for seeing the ghost of what a mother might be, what a mother might mean. One senses, however, that the vision will remain in the memory and the imagination where Maisie's generous nature will cherish it . . .

In *The Spoils of Poynton*, towards the end of the novel, there is speculation about an actual ghost at Poynton, the house that widowed aesthete Mrs Gereth has now passed down to her son Owen:

> 'Somehow there were no ghosts at Poynton,' Fleda went on. 'That was the only fault.'
>
> Mrs. Gereth, considering, appeared to fall in with this fine humour. 'Poynton was too splendidly happy.'
>
> 'Poynton was too splendidly happy,' Fleda promptly echoed.

> 'But it's cured of that now,' her companion added.
>
> 'Yes, henceforth there'll be a ghost or two.'
>
> Mrs. Gereth thought again: she found her young friend suggestive. 'Only *she* won't see them.'[12]

The implication here is that Owen will be haunted, as he lives his life, by the fact that he has married the monstrous Mona Brigstock when he might have had the superior Fleda Vetch for his wife: haunted by regret, haunted by the ghosts of lost kindness and sensitivity and fellow feeling.

Yet it is the hazy remembrance of the 'maiden-aunt' who used to live at Mrs Gereth's new home, Ricks, which provides the most haunted section of the book. Fleda Vetch senses the ghost of this aunt, powerfully, in Ricks' atmosphere and it delights and sustains her, opening out the possibilities of the sort of life generally viewed as closed.

> The more she looked about the surer she felt of the character of the maiden-aunt, the sense of whose dim presence urged her to pacification: the maiden-aunt had been a dear; she should have adored the maiden-aunt. The poor lady had passed shyly, yet with some bruises, through life; had been sensitive and ignorant and exquisite: that too was a sort of origin, a sort of atmosphere for relics and rarities . . .

It is this scene from *The Spoils of Poynton* that I return to in thought more than any other – to the extent that I put something of the aunt's brave, delicate, suffering atmosphere into a small flat in my own first novel. The ghost of a good mother for Maisie also continues to haunt my imagination, where I sometimes find myself, on an ordinary Tuesday, wishing Maisie good things, better things.

'The Turn of the Screw' has been written about more than any other work by Henry James. There is something about its dark heart, its obsessive heroine and its invitations and refusals to be pinned down that renders it irresistible to critics. And yet it is knowing in the extreme. Almost everything you might say of

it, the tale says first about itself. 'The story *won't* tell . . . not in any literal, vulgar way,' Douglas warns us in the framing narrative. Well, you can say that again. Any ghost worth its salt will make you yourself feel like an interloper on account of its prior claim, and the story gives us that remark also: 'While these instants lasted indeed I had the extraordinary chill of a feeling that it was I who was the intruder,' says the governess.

'The Turn of the Screw' is a tale in which facts and sensations of wildly differing importance frequently carry the same amount of emphasis, are indeed so mixed and merged that it can be bewildering; but then we are alerted to this in the governess's first line: 'I remember the whole beginning as a succession of flights and drops, a little see-saw of the right throbs and the wrong.' This sentence hints that the difference between good and bad is uncertain from the start and that any attempt to distinguish between the two can take on the arbitrary quality of a child's game. 'The Turn of the Screw' examines what it means for a highly strung young woman to see herself fully, or to try to, for the first time. What novelty do we find in pride of place in the governess's bedroom? Why, full-length mirrors, in which she will be able to observe herself 'from head to foot', which we are told her previous 'scant home' lacked.

'The Turn of the Screw' is a complex, rich text that can withstand the most forensic levels of analysis, even those based on psychological theories devised decades after it was conceived.[13] You can approach it as a ghost story of unparalleled subtlety and skill – where the ambiguity itself stands as a sort of third ghost – or, equally, it can be read as an intricate portrait of an inexperienced young woman with a surfeit of consciousness and a youngest daughter's natural desire for heroism, who gains her first taste of romance and straight away steps into a world of overwhelming responsibility and loss.

'The Turn of the Screw' made a strong impression from its initial appearance in *Collier's Weekly* magazine, where it ran in twelve episodes from January to April 1898. It was published in book form in October of the same year, alongside the tale

'Covering End', in a volume called *The Two Magics*. Most contemporary critics were enjoyably horrified by 'The Turn of the Screw'; they took both pleasure and satisfaction in the suffering it portrays, as well as a delight in the way it achieved its effects. On 15 October 1898, *The New York Times Saturday Review of Books and Art* described it as 'a deliberate, powerful, and horribly successful study of the magic of evil, of the subtle influence over human hearts and minds of the sin with which this world is accursed'.[14] *Literature* on the same day termed it 'so astonishing a piece of art that it cannot be described'. A week later *The New York Tribune* claimed that the story 'crystallizes an original and fascinating idea in absolutely appropriate form' and the *Detroit Free Press* called the work a 'horribly successful study' of depravity. In December of that year *The American Monthly Review of Reviews* termed it 'the finest work . . . [James] has ever done – for the foul breath of the bottomless pit itself, which strikes the reader full in the face as he follows the plot, puts to shame by its penetrating force and quiet ghastliness the commonplace, unreal "horrors" of the ordinary ghost-story; it does indeed give an extra "turn of the screw" beyond anything of the sort that fiction has yet provided.' In March 1899 the reviewer in *Chautauquan* went even further, writing that James's technique was 'a skill little short of the supernatural', as though James himself were a phantom of talent: inexplicable, other-worldly, beyond compare. These reviewers saw the novella as a work of art with a definitive, even transcendent quality – echoing the view of the story that Douglas himself puts forward in its framing device: 'Nothing at all that I know touches it . . . For dreadful – dreadfulness! . . . For general uncanny ugliness and horror and pain.'

A smaller band of the novella's early critics found the story made for compromising reading, forcing the reader to collude with the horror on the page. It was wrong to be entertained by such misery, was the view, and to do so indicated a moral insufficiency on the part of the reader. In October 1898 *The Outlook* proclaimed that 'The story itself is distinctly repulsive.' In November *The Bookman* stated that 'We have never read a more sickening, a more gratuitously melancholy tale.' In

January 1899 *The Independent* went as far as to suggest that in reading the tale 'one has been assisting in an outrage upon the holiest and sweetest fountain of human innocence'. These critics considered the work itself morally reprehensible. They thought it cynical and written 'down' for a breathless magazine audience, for money and for popularity, perhaps in response to James's recent wounding failure with his play *Guy Domville*, which had been painfully mauled at its premiere on the London stage in 1985.

Some twenty-five years later, commentators began to condemn the children's governess. F. L. Pattee, in 1923, suggested that the story might be about her psychological disturbance; Edna Kenton pointed out the following year that it was possible to doubt the 'young governess's word'. These views gained strong currency in 1934 in Edmund Wilson's famous study, 'The Ambiguity of Henry James', in which he pronounced that 'the young governess who tells the story is a neurotic case of sex repression, and the ghosts are not real ghosts at all but merely the governess's hallucinations.' Thirty years later comparisons were drawn by Oscar Cargill between the heroine in 'The Turn of the Screw' and the subject of Sigmund Freud's 'The Case of Miss Lucy R.'. Lucy R. was a patient Freud treated in 1892–3, a governess from Glasgow working for a wealthy Viennese widower, with whom she had fallen in love. There are more recent essays too, which speak of rescuing the children from the Freudians, and studies condemning the Freudians for just not being Freudian enough. James's own life is brought to bear by some of these critics, who see in the ghosts, real or imagined, images of the author's own 'struggles with his sexuality', as one might term it today.

The attempt to ascertain whether the ghosts the governess sees are real or figments of her taxed imagination seems doomed to failure. Such clamouring after certainty hinges partly on something that isn't relevant at all – whether you yourself think there are such things as ghosts. More importantly, even the critics who doubt the existence of the ghosts, believing that the governess has conjured them out of her own neurosis, from the stress and pressures of her situation and her ardent desire

for her employer or as a vehicle for childish heroism, all agree that the governess herself believes the ghosts are real. I have never heard an argument made that the ghosts are a deliberate ruse on her part, a wilful deception to further her own ends. It is interesting to note that in no other ghost story by Henry James is the appearance of ghosts presented as the false invention of an overwrought mind.

Of course, if the ghosts are real within the action rather than imagined, the story holds a different kind of horror. Actual ghosts bring a universal distressing element of terror into what otherwise would be a harsh and specific domestic tragedy. James himself found the story terrifying. When he had finished correcting the proofs, he told his friend Edmund Gosse: 'I was so frightened that I was afraid to go upstairs to bed!'[15] It is true that the ghosts are consummately vivid on the page: Miss Jessel's terrible, miserable figure in the schoolroom, usurping our heroine at the writing table; Quint roaming the grounds in a scene 'stricken with death'. Yet it is worth pointing out that even if Miss Jessel and Quint had both left in disgrace, died and had the decency to vanish from the scene for ever, not deigning to haunt at all, the scant facts of their sad histories would have hung heavy in the air at Bly. Our governess could have been jealous of the fact that they had spent so much time with 'her' children. She could still have been shocked and curious about the 'freedoms' they had taken with Flora and Miles. She could have wanted to solve the mysteries of their existences. This might well, in the absence of firmer things to dwell upon, have turned into an obsession . . .

I view the ambiguity in 'The Turn of the Screw' not as an obstacle to understanding but almost as a character in itself, for it is carefully built and has strong properties and currents. Ambiguity is central to the tale and although it invites readers to reach for resolution and interpretation, the novella is at its best, by which I mean yields the most, when the ambiguity is held as a sort of beacon of inspiration and fine intelligence, rather than interpreted away. Besides, when the dangers of overinterpretation actually pierce the plot of a story as they do in 'The Turn of the Screw', where the governess and her charges

materially suffer as a result of her mania for locating meaning in whatever she sees, it is wise to be wary in one's reading. Deliberating whether the ghosts are real or unreal seems to have become a way of not attending to the story. David Lodge captures this best when he writes 'James's later fiction constantly aspired to the condition of ambiguity – that the impossibility of arriving at a single, simple version of the "truth" about any human action or experience is, in the broadest sense, what that fiction is about.'[16] As with all works of art where ambiguity is a dominant feature, it feels more useful to investigate how this condition is achieved and what it means rather than attempting to resolve or do away with it.

'The Turn of the Screw' gains its mystery and power from the way Henry James sets distinct opposing currents running forcefully against each other. These currents destabilize, confuse and subvert the way information is related to the reader, creating an atmosphere that is fraught and taxed. James invites us to have a less complex set of responses to the governess's tale than the tale itself merits, to go along with things despite our mounting sense of unease and, in this way, we are seduced into a breathless version of events that may sit uncomfortably with us, but which we are reluctant to challenge. We are carried away by the governess's impressions, just as she herself is, yet even as we feel the force of her strength of feeling, which is mesmerizing, our awareness that her rendering of the situation is partial, and may be skewed, grows and brims.

This first occurs when we receive Douglas's fine character reference for the young governess – even though they only meet ten years after the events in the story, it still stands as a prism through which her history is to be read. 'She was the most agreeable woman I've ever known in her position; she'd have been worthy of any whatever.' We are told that she was 'awfully clever and nice' and that he 'liked her extremely'. We are also given a picture of her methods: 'we had, in her off-hours, some strolls and talks in the garden . . . I remember the time and the place [of her telling him her story] – the corner of the lawn, the shade of the great beeches and the long hot summer afternoon.' Should a governess spend her time off strolling about with the

young gentleman of the house, regaling him with the adventures she has passed? It does not seem ideal. This early example of behaviour that could scarcely be called immaculate framed by high praise sets a pattern for many more moments in the tale where occurrences or phrases of an opposing nature are set next to each other as though they carry the same meaning.

Once the governess's narrative begins, we are frequently invited to take consciousness for conscientiousness and anxiety for loving care. Many of the unsettling aspects of 'The Turn of the Screw' stem from the governess's mania for self-analysis. She monitors herself as a doctor might hover over a favourite patient. Her every step and breath is entered into extravagantly, her feelings reported as facts. The fuller the governess's descriptions and impressions are, the more precise and reliable we may expect them to be, but this is not the case. She purports to offer us a narrative of openness and full accounting but the more information we are given, the more confusing and claustrophobic things become. Yet how else are we to make sense of events, except through her words? Her rendering of the fine detail of every drop or soaring of her spirits does not result in self-knowledge or action or even caution, but in opaqueness and paralysis. Furthermore, her obsessive thinking sometimes limits feelings of sympathy or empathy. (Her utter disdain for Miss Jessel's suffering always surprises me.) In addition, the governess's emphasis is often misleading, for she can be playful and slapdash in relation to the things that matter most and serious-hearted and analytical towards situations that you would associate with pleasure and ease. At times her routine sensory perceptions are presented with the kind of thoroughness one would only require if one did not already know what an eye did, or of what an ear was capable. This all adds up to a novella with a central nervous system that is tense, fraught, alarming, brimming and highly strung.

None of this, of course, is remotely surprising considering the baffling ways in which events in the governess's own life have unfolded. Her recent past has been crammed with the most bewildering push and pull between girlhood and adulthood, between reality, expectation and fantasy. First she has

reached the (perhaps painful) decision to leave home and seek work. Next she is greatly moved by a meeting with the sort of man she has only dreamed of or read about in novels, a childish sensation, certainly, but one with a troubling grown-up sexual undertow. She has been asked to do this man a great favour for a handsome sum, which makes her feel like a heroine of worth, perhaps a rare feeling for the youngest daughter of a poor country parson. She has the experience of having profound gratitude shown to her, a sense of a solid and admirable man being in her debt, very likely the first time this has happened. He expresses this by taking her hand, almost certainly the first time *that* has happened. She is then told that he never wants to hear from her, let alone see her again. This is perhaps as dizzying as Maisie's smash into the jewellery shop that is her mother's breast, where for a brief second there was the ghost of softness and rescue.

To confuse things further, the governess arrives at the man's country house expecting gloom and drear, and it isn't anything like as bad as she has anticipated. She is allocated one of Bly's best rooms, given the run of the house and grounds, handed 'her' children, set up as an adult with power and responsibility. She has many of the accoutrements of the mistress of the house. There is a set of sums before her with wrong answers that she is being asked to pronounce correct. Is it any wonder she feels bolts of triumph and uncertainty?

We can sense the governess's struggle to understand and frame her situation while experiencing overriding feelings of bewilderment, in her patterns of speech. Throughout the tale she has a strange conversational tic of presenting us with pairs of words that go against the grain of each other as though they are almost synonyms. She refers to the children's 'false little lovely eyes' and sees Miles as living 'in a setting of beauty and misery', as though false and lovely, and misery and beauty, are well-known bedfellows. She sees 'repulsion' and 'compassion' at once in Mrs Grose. She qualifies the word 'happiest' with the word 'grotesque' in describing the night Flora spends with the housekeeper, after the crisis in Chapter XX. She attempts to convey the strength of her vision by saying it was 'as definite

as a picture in a frame', as though this were an example of maximum reality. These speech patterns are unsettling, as they strive to assert or resolve something outside their reach. Her tripped-up phrases, her synonyms that are closer to opposites, add to the precariousness of the atmosphere.

Despite the governess's lavish chronicling, we gain a growing awareness as the story progresses that there is much we are not being told. We hear in Chapter IV that she has had 'disturbing letters from home', to which the children provide a valuable antidote, but she does not tell us what the troubles are. Illness, financial problems, bereavement? She says that she understands how little girls idolize boys, for she 'had had' brothers. Does she not still? As with many a good literary heroine before her, no mention is made of her mother. Does she share a vista on the world of grief that the children inhabit? We don't know. We learn that Miles has been expelled from school and there is much speculation as to why, yet she does not make any enquiries for days and days, and even congratulates herself on this ('I had made up my mind . . . I was incisive . . . I was wonderful'). Meanwhile, a stroll on a pleasant afternoon is rendered with a level of detail designed to stun:

> This moment dated from an afternoon hour that I happened to spend in the grounds with the younger of my pupils alone. We had left Miles indoors, on the red cushion of a deep window-seat; he had wished to finish a book, and I had been glad to encourage a purpose so laudable in a young man whose only defect was a certain ingenuity of restlessness. His sister, on the contrary, had been alert to come out, and I strolled with her half an hour, seeking the shade, for the sun was still high and the day exceptionally warm. I was aware afresh with her, as we went, of how, like her brother, she contrived – it was the charming thing in both children – to let me alone without appearing to drop me and to accompany me without appearing to oppress. They were never importunate and yet never listless. My attention to them all really went to seeing them amuse themselves immensely without me: this was a spectacle they seemed actively to prepare and that employed me as an active admirer. I walked in a world of their

> invention – they had no occasion whatever to draw upon mine; so that my time was taken only with being for them some remarkable person or thing that the game of the moment required and that was merely, thanks to my superior, my exalted stamp, a happy and highly distinguished sinecure. I forget what I was on the present occasion; I only remember that I was something very important and very quiet and that Flora was playing very hard.

Of course the full-blown intricacies of this sort of observation are familiar to us from other Henry James characters of this period. We might think of the obsessive tendencies of the heroine of *In the Cage* (1898), who lives her life vicariously through the comings and goings of the clientele of the Mayfair post office where she is in charge of telegrams. We might think of *The Sacred Fount* (1901), where the hero's dedication to uncovering the carryings-on of the other weekend guests results in an orgy of interpretation, the vast majority of which proves hollow. Similarly, in *The Spoils of Poynton*, Fleda Vetch's fidelity to living by a set of principles that soar above those required by the challenges that face her (she adopts a sacrificial moral code more suited to sainthood than romance in the country) reflects an equally obsessive character. In these cases we are aware early on that we are witnessing distortions of temperament, of situation. These characters may behave as though they are caught up in 'matters of life and death', but we know it is not true. The governess's narrative in 'The Turn of the Screw', however, is so intense and tightly focussed that we believe from the start that matters of life and death genuinely lie at the heart of the story.

This sense of obsessiveness is given even more power when James occasionally relaxes the tension, spiking the governess's overwrought thoughts with calm observations natural to the world of adults and children. These moments are surprisingly arresting and unnerving, perhaps because they mean we can no longer confidently say that things are *not* as they seem. When the governess mentions that her favourite hour of the day is the 'small interval alone' when the children are asleep, you have to read the statement twice. It is almost impossible to countenance, such is her wild preoccupation with their beauty, their

heart-stirring play, their delicate instincts and high moral standing. The moment delivers a gust of fresh air, as when someone who always lies suddenly delivers a straight answer. It is also disconcerting, because it contrasts so strongly with the governess's general outlook. The smash of normality takes on the appearance of something untoward.

The governess sometimes appears to make the standard banal observations that parents and carers of children routinely make, yet her comments distort the familiar even as they suggest it. She says of her youngest charge, at the end of Chapter I, that she wants to 'win the child into the sense of knowing me', which sounds perfectly straightforward until you reflect that a new governess in a new job ought to be exercised about getting to know her charges, not the other way round. Later, she tells us 'I used to speculate . . . as to how the rough future (for all futures are rough!) would handle them and might bruise them.' On the face of it this is an ordinary parental concern. You gaze at your perfect infant with its almost impossible-to-believe tiny toes and tight fists and tangle of hair (if you're lucky) and you think of its going out into the world. You imagine a child tackling the strains of adulthood with a child's limited strength and resources, a baby going to work on a train, or queuing for lunch or getting the sack; and it all seems dangerous and alarming. But this attempt at sharing in conventional adult fellow-feeling doesn't quite work. These concerns don't apply to Flora and Miles, because they have not known the mythical peace of early childhood. Their past is already fallen and broken, their young lives, from the start, blighted by dreadful hurts, bereavement, loss and neglect. It is a brilliant and brilliantly subtle distortion.

For these children, of course, are orphans, par excellence. They've been orphaned and orphaned and orphaned. They are little monuments to loss, for the five people closest to them have all died in the last few years. They occupy that strange emotional territory that is usually the reserve of the very elderly: they know more people who are dead than are alive. Their father, a soldier, has died. Their grandparents are also recently dead. Their two companions, Quint and Miss Jessel, are gone. So steeped in loss are they that the loss of their mother does not

even merit a mention, but Miles, the older child, might well remember her, and her death makes six. These children of loss are mysterious and unfathomable. Their thorough acquaintance with disaster gives them a certain status and power. The one living relative we know of, their dashing uncle in Harley Street, is determined not even to hear their news. Is there anything else the world can throw at them? Of course, the fiction of Henry James is never a safe place to be a child. One only has to think of little Effie in *The Other House*, Pansy Osmond in *Portrait of a Lady*, even Maisie Farange, but in 'The Turn of the Screw' James has surpassed himself in this regard. In a letter to F. W. H. Myers in 1898, James said he had intended the children to be 'as *exposed* as we can humanly conceive children to be'.[17] They are.

This wall of grief makes our heroine's appointment even more intimidating and her responsibility all the greater. The very best thing she can do for the children is to stay alive herself. There are not many jobs for young women where this requirement tops the list . . . The eagerness of the children to attach themselves to the governess may strike us as the conduct of small bereaved people who feel they've nothing to their name. They might well have the joy that the terminally ill sometimes possess, where everything before them is a sort of gift, the spring blossom viscerally beautiful and so on. Is that how they receive their new governess? Is that why they engage with so much verve and brio in her lessons and games? Why they love to hear about the funny turns of phrase of the women in her village? We are told that following the death of Miles and Flora's grandparents in India, their eldest son, the children's uncle, became their guardian. So it seems these children have also moved continents, from warmth to cold, from the grandparents' home to boarding school, the care of strangers, the formality of a staffed English household. Of course they would turn in on each other, for comfort and for understanding, these children with an embarrassment of loss. Does this make them unreachable to their governess, despite their apparent ardour for her? She calls them 'almost impersonal'. Does this further frustrate her desire for control? No adults in their

lives have proved themselves to be dependable, thus far. Why should they put their happiness in her hands?

Grief in the house plays a large part in the governess's narrative method. The more mysterious and closed-off the children become, the more she tries to prise herself open, for answers. The governess exhibits a sort of girlish greed in this regard: the more unequal she feels to the task of protecting her charges, the more she endeavours to prove herself a heroine. She states her desire for recognition at the start: 'I daresay I fancied myself in short a remarkable young woman and took comfort in the faith that this would more publicly appear.' Is she a governess who wants to achieve the status of a governess-heroine like Jane Eyre? For our governess is certainly schooled in the adventures of the governess-heroines who have gone before. It is scarcely surprising that one of her earliest concerns appears to be with what exactly a heroine is: how do you become one, which is the best sort? What sort of character is she and in what story? The children's story, alongside Flora, with her 'hair of gold and her frock of blue' inside the 'castle of romance inhabited by a rosy sprite'? The darker tale of madness and attics and ruin?

A heroine's trajectory might typically be: accept the job in the most becoming and modest way; win the children over, and help compensate them for some of their grief and suffering; earn their trust; shape them in a way that is pleasing; make great strides with their lessons and characters and, through this diligent work, win the heart of the master. She has come 'to be carried away', she announces to Mrs Grose on her first day, as she was 'carried away in London'. To a certain extent it is she who carries both the children and Mrs Grose away. At times she carries us. Her hopes are not without precedent, of course. We might think again of Jane Eyre, who of course marries her employer, although not until he is brought low by tragedy. Even when Mr Rochester meets Jane for the first time and pretends not to know who she is, he has a broken ankle, he needs her support. Yet who needs *this* woman? The master does not need her, and nor do the children. They like her, but it is hard for her presence to register as fully with them, it seems, as all the things

they have lost. Miles and Flora never truly meet the feelings of love she conceives for them, almost at first sight, and the governess's romantic hopes with her employer have even less substance. 'Never trouble me again', 'let me alone' is what people say after an argument, or an acknowledged estrangement. Even if it is said with a good deal of charm and hand-holding and gratitude, in a grand house filled with beautiful things, it might make a good ending between a man and a woman, but it is a terrible beginning. It is almost a curse. Of course, it is scarcely the master's fault if his prospective employee has constructed a romance built around their two brief meetings. But demanding she 'never, never' contact him? How does it occur to him that she will manage? He doesn't think. It doesn't occur. Her gradual realization of this truth prompts a crisis. There is something starving about the governess's imagination and her paucity of experience that necessitates the ghosts. They will force the children to need her at the deepest level. They lend her life meaning. Why be Jane Eyre when you could trump her brave and noble spirit as a saint, 'fighting with a demon for a human soul'?

All the opposing currents in the story serve to prepare us for the most uneasy pairing of all, the contract between the governess and the reader. For all her neuroses and unreliable narration, there is a deep, essential bond between the heroine of 'The Turn of the Screw' and those who read her story. While Mrs Grose and Miles and Flora do not see the ghosts, which may well have been conjured from the governess's inability to stretch to the requirements of her situation, the reader sees them unequivocally. Peter Quint and Miss Jessel are made marvellously vivid to us. They loom and terrify from the page. They frighten both the governess and ourselves. If she has made them up then so have we.

In 'The Turn of the Screw' and the other stories in this collection, ghosts furnish James with opportunities to examine the more troubling, mysterious and disarming aspects of consciousness. James's ghosts excavate, reveal and illumine. They may terrify, they may amuse, but they also serve as ambassadors of knowledge and understanding, showing us things we

otherwise would not see, or recognize, or could not bear to entertain. Whether shedding light on the more dreadful aspects of family life and the complexities of late adolescence, or negotiating disappointment and the thinning out of great expectations, ghosts that would be simple and uncouth in the hands of others can lend themselves to the deepest and most subtle investigations in the works of Henry James.

James's obsession with ghosts may at times seem hard to fathom but what work he puts them to . . .

NOTES

1. From a letter to Violet Paget, 27 April 1890, *Henry James Letters*, vol. 3, ed. Leon Edel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974–1984; 1980), pp. 276–78.
2. From a letter to F. W. H. Myers, 19 December 1898, *Henry James Letters*, vol. 4, ed. Leon Edel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974–1984), pp. 87–88.
3. From a letter to H. G. Wells, 9 December 1898, *Henry James Letters*, vol. 4, ed. Leon Edel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), pp. 85–87.
4. From a letter to the psychiatrist Dr Louis Waldstein, 21 October 1898, *Henry James Letters*, vol. 4, ed. Leon Edel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 84.
5. From a letter to Paul Bourget, 19 August 1898, *The Letters of Henry James*, vol. 1, ed. Percy Lubbock (London: Macmillan, 1920), pp. 286–90
6. F. R. Leavis, 'James's "What Maisie Knew": A Disagreement', *SCRUTINY*, vol. 17, no. 2 (Summer 1950), pp. 117, 116.
7. From a letter to Hendrik Anderson, 25 November 1906, *Dearly Beloved Friends: Henry James's Letters to Younger Men*, ed. Susan E. Gunter and Steven H. Jobe (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004), p. 61.
8. From a letter to Francis Boott, 11 October 1895, *Henry James Letters*, vol. 4, ed. Leon Edel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974–1984), pp. 23–24.
9. Virginia Woolf, *Granite and Rainbow* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1958), p. 70.

10. William Dean Howells, *In After Days: Thoughts on the Future Life* (New York: Harper, 1910), p. 193–233.
11. Henry James, *What Maisie Knew* (London: Penguin, 1985), p. 108.
12. Henry James, *The Spoils of Poynton* (London: Penguin, 1987), p. 203.
13. In a 1942 radio programme, the American poet and critic Allen Tate said 'James knew substantially all that Freud knew before Freud came on the scene'. Mark van Doren (ed.), *The New Invitation to Learning* (New York: Random House, 1942), p.231.
14. Quotations from contemporary reviewers and later commentators are taken from *The Turn of the Screw: Authoritative Text, Contexts, Criticism*, ed. Deborah Esch and Jonathan Warren (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999) and Edward J. Parkinson, '"The Turn of the Screw": A History of Its Critical Interpretations, 1898–1979', (PhD dissertation, Saint Louis University, 1991).
15. Edmund Gosse, *Aspects and Impressions* (London: Cassell and Company, 1922), p. 38.
16. See David Lodge's introduction, *The Spoils of Poynton* (London: Penguin, 1987), p. 6.
17. From a letter to F. W. H Myers, 19 December 1898, *Henry James Letters*, vol. 4, ed. Leon Edel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974–1984), pp. 87–88.

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