

The Sick and the Well: Playing at Life in "Daisy Miller"

by Janet Tassel (June 2015)

Even after more than a century, Henry James's 1878 story, "Daisy Miller," retains its central problem: How to respond to Daisy, with pity or contempt? In the New York preface of 1907, where James refers to the story as his "bantling," he calls Daisy "an object scant and superficially vulgar—from which, however, a sufficiently brooding tenderness might eventually extract a shy incongruous charm." Later in the preface, a friend scoldingly asks him why he has "not only led our judgement of it astray, but made *any* judgement quite impossible?"

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