

illustrated
version

THOMAS MANN

*Death
in Venice*

*Mario and
the Magician*

THOMAS MANN

Mario and the Magician
Death in Venice

Deatils translated
by Martin C. Doege

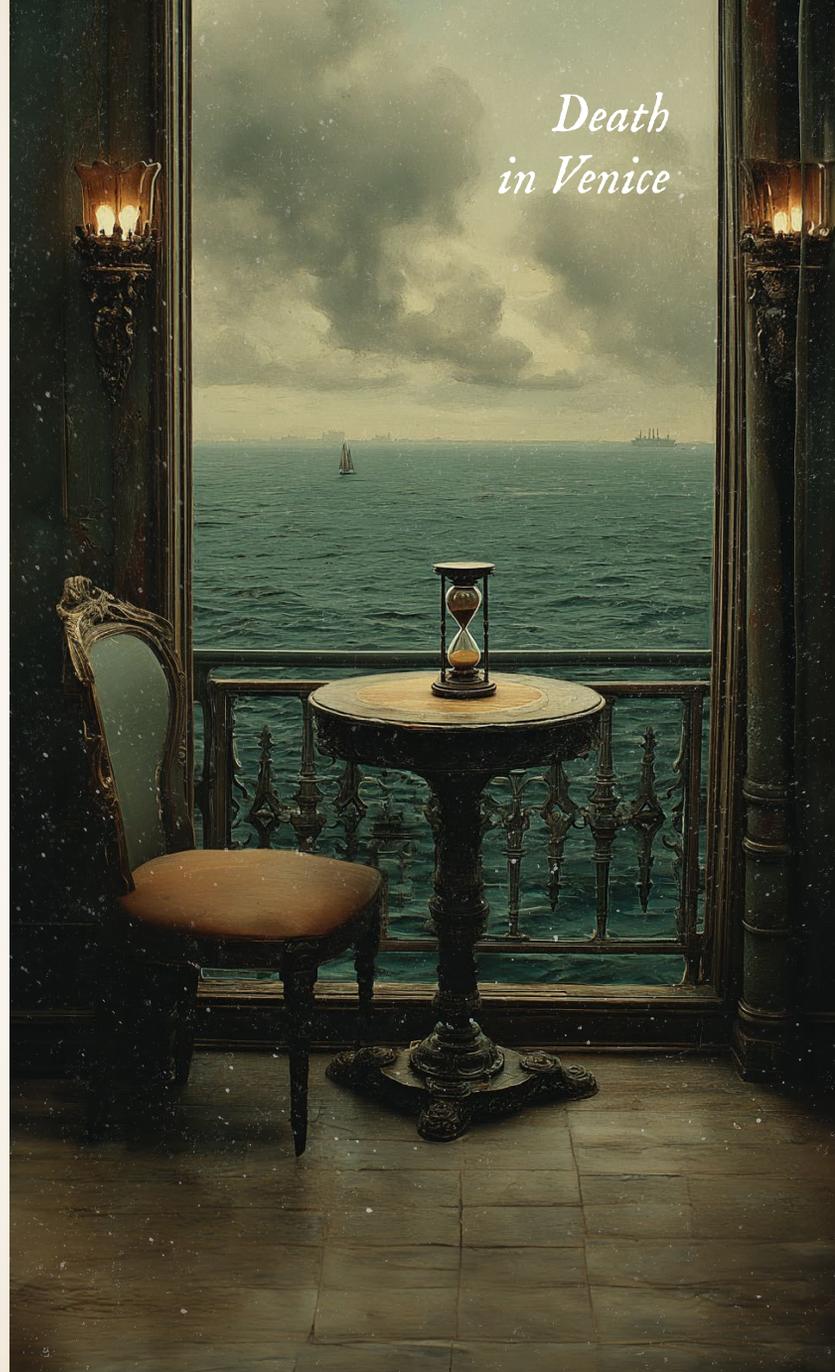
Illustrated
by Judit Imre

THE QUOTE FOR THE COVER:

"But the sky and the sea remained cloudy and leaden, at times a fog-like drizzle fell, and slowly he accepted that he would, reaching it by water, discover a vastly different Venice from that which he had approached over land. He stood next to the foremast, gazing into the distance, expecting to see land."

"In his parents' house, many years ago, there had been an hourglass—he suddenly saw the frail and important device again as if it stood before his eyes. Silently and finely the rust-coloured sand traversed the glassy bottleneck, and since it was becoming less in the upper half, a small torrential vortex had formed there."

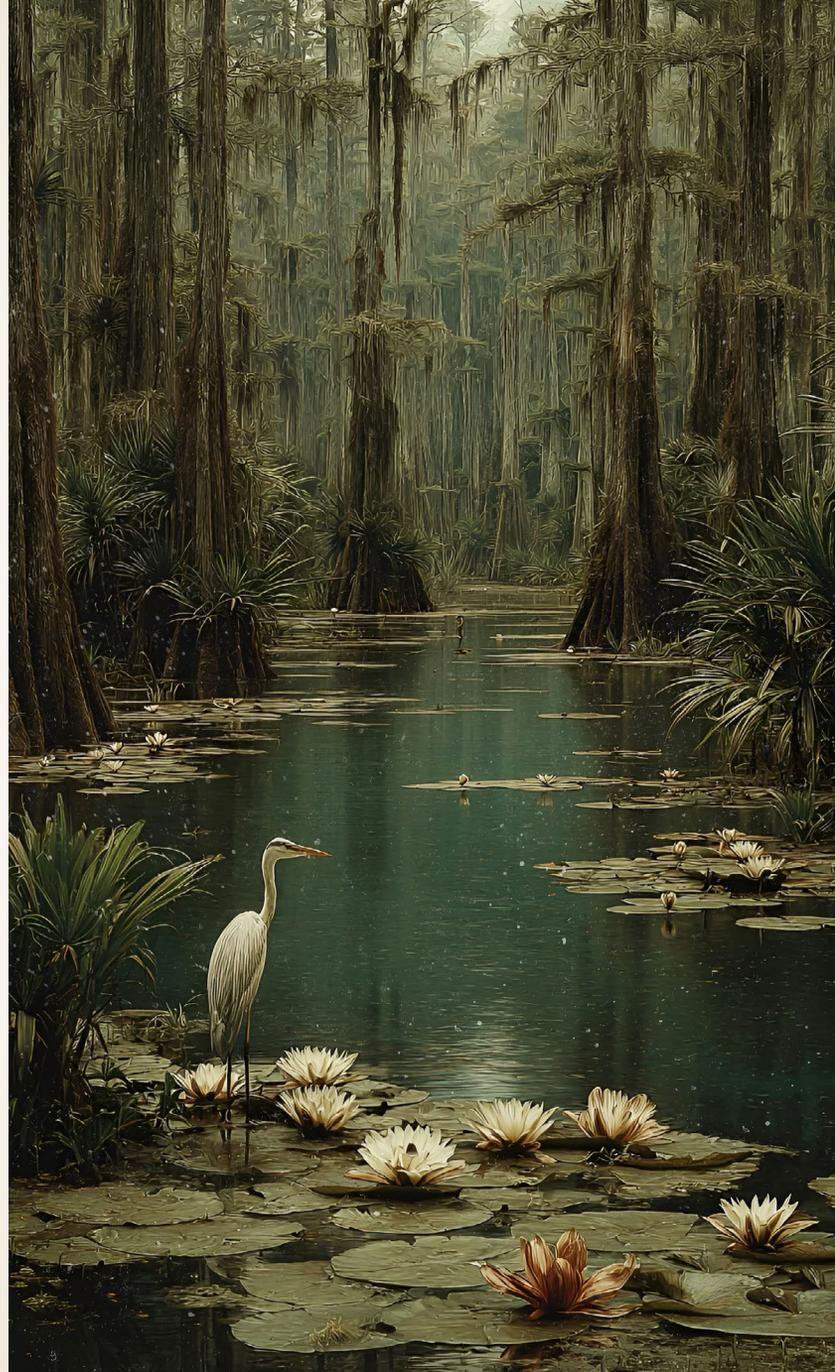
– *The hourglass motif in the novel*



*Death
in Venice*

Detail from the Chapter II

"If it was the wayfarer-like air of the foreigner working on his imagination or some other corporeal or mental influence that caused it: a strange distention of his soul unexpectedly made itself known, a sort of roving unrest, a juvenile thirst for the distant, a feeling, so novel and yet so long-forgotten that he, hands on his back and his eyes fixed at the ground, stood transfixed to probe that emotion and its nature and aim. It was wander lust, nothing more; but verily coming in the form of a fit and ardently intensified, even to the point of an illusion. Because he saw, as a sample of all those wonders and horrors of the diversity on Earth which his desire was suddenly able to imagine, an enormous landscape, a tropical swamp under a moist and heavy sky, wet, lush, and unhealthy, a primordial wilderness of islands and mud-bearing backwaters that men avoid. The shallow islands, the soil of which was covered with leaf as thick as hands, with enormous ferns, with juicy, macerated and wonderfully flowering plants, ejected upwards hairy palm trunks, and strangely formless trees, whose roots sprung from the trunks and connected to the water or the ground through the air, formed disorienting arrangements. On the brackish, glaucously-reflecting stream milk-white, bowl-sized flowers were floating; high-shouldered birds of all kinds with shapeless beaks were standing on tall legs in the shallow water and looked askance unmoving /.../ which seemed to hover in a limbo between creation and decay, between the knotty trunks of a bamboo thicket..."



Detail from the Chapter II

"About that novel, always recurring kind of heroic type so favoured by this writer, a keen essayist had remarked once: that he was the conception of "an intellectual and ephebe-like masculinity that stands silent in proud shame, clenching its teeth while it is pierced by swords and spears. That was beautiful, intelligent, and correct, despite its somewhat exaggerated accentuation of passivity. Because grace under pressure is more than just suffering; it is an active achievement, a positive triumph and the figure of St Sebastian is its best symbol, if perhaps not in art generally, but certainly in the art of writing. Gazing at the written world, seeing the elegant self-restraint that guards an inner decomposition, a biological decay until the last moment from the prying eyes of the world; that bilious, sensually disadvantaged ugliness that is able to kindle its smoldering fire into a pure flame and to even usurp the throne in the kingdom of beauty; the pallid impotence, which retrieves from the glowing depths of the soul the power to prostrate an entire wanton people before the cross, before its own feet; the amiable attitude in the empty and severe employ of the form; the counterfeit and dangerous life; the quickly unnerving yearning and art of the born fraud: considering all these things and so many others more, one could doubt if there even was a sort of heroism not marked by meekness. And what kind of heroism would be more timely than this one?"

– *The St. Sebastian motif in the novel*



Detail from the Chapter III

"A group of young people formed the company of the first deck, apparently tradesman's apprentices from Pola who had merrily united for a trip to Italy. They made a lot of fuss about themselves and their enterprise, chattered, laughed, contentedly enjoyed their own gesticulating /.../ One in a bright yellow, excessively fashionable summer suit, red tie, and a boldly bent up panama hat, exceeded all the others with his shrill voice and gayness. No sooner had Aschenbach set eyes on him than he realized with a kind of terror that this ephebe was false. He was ancient there could be no doubt about it. Wrinkles surrounded his mouth and eyes. The meek crimson of his cheeks was makeup, that brown hair below the colourfully-banded straw hat was a wig, his neck was dilapidated and sinewy, his moustache was dyed, his yellowish and complete set of teeth which he laughingly presented was a cheap counterfeit, and his hands with signet rings on both index fingers were that of a very old man. With a shudder Aschenbach looked at him and his communion with his friends."

"So he cannot get away for several minutes from the intrusiveness of the ghastly old man, who is compelled by his drunkenness to bid the foreigner good-bye. "We are wishing a most enjoyable stay. One hopes to be remembered well! Au revoir, excusez and bonjour, Your Excellency!" His mouth is watering, he winks, licks the corners of his mouth and the dyed moustache on his lips is ruffled up..."



Detail from the chapter IV

"But the sky and the sea remained cloudy and leaden, at times a fog-like drizzle fell, and slowly he accepted that he would, reaching it by water, discover avastly different Venice from that which he had approached over land. He stood next to the foremast, gazing into the distance, expecting to see land."

– *The Narcissus motif in the novel*



Details from the Chapter V

"In the meantime the guitarist had begun a solo to his own accompaniment, a multi-verse song that was currently making its rounds through Italy, in the refrain of which his company joined him with their singing and instruments and which he emphasized in a dramatic way. Lanky and with a thin and scrawny face he stood apart from the others, a sleazy felt in his nape, with a lump of his auburn hair protruding from under the brim, in an attitude of cheeky bravado on the grave land emitted his jokes in a forceful recitative at the terrace to the tunes of his guitar. He did not look Venetian, rather like a Neapolitan comedian, part pimp, part gagman, brutal and bold, dangerous and entertaining. His normally relatively ridiculous song was transformed by his mouth and was made, thanks to his facial expressions, his body movements, his way of winking or salaciously playing with his tongue in the corners of his mouth, a little ambiguous and somehow objectionable. His pallid, round-nosed, beardless face, which made it difficult to guess his age, seemed ploughed up by grimacing and vice, and somehow the grinning of his nimble mouth did not fit the two deep furrows, defiant, imperious, and almost wild, between his reddish brows. But what really caused Aschenbach to focus on him was the observation that the suspicious figure seemed to carry with it its own suspicious ambience. Every time at the refrain, he started to dance around, shaking hands, coming close to Aschenbach's table, and every time that happened, his body and his clothes emanated a cloud of disinfectant smell."

– *The clown motif in the novel*



"Who would not have had to fight a slight unease, a secret resentment and trepidation when one, for the first or after a long time, had to get into a Venetian gondola? That strange vehicle, which seems unchanged from more fanciful times and which is so strangely black like normally only coffins are, reminds one of silent and criminal adventures in the lapping night, furthermore it is reminiscent of death itself, the bier, the drab funeral and the final, wordless ride."

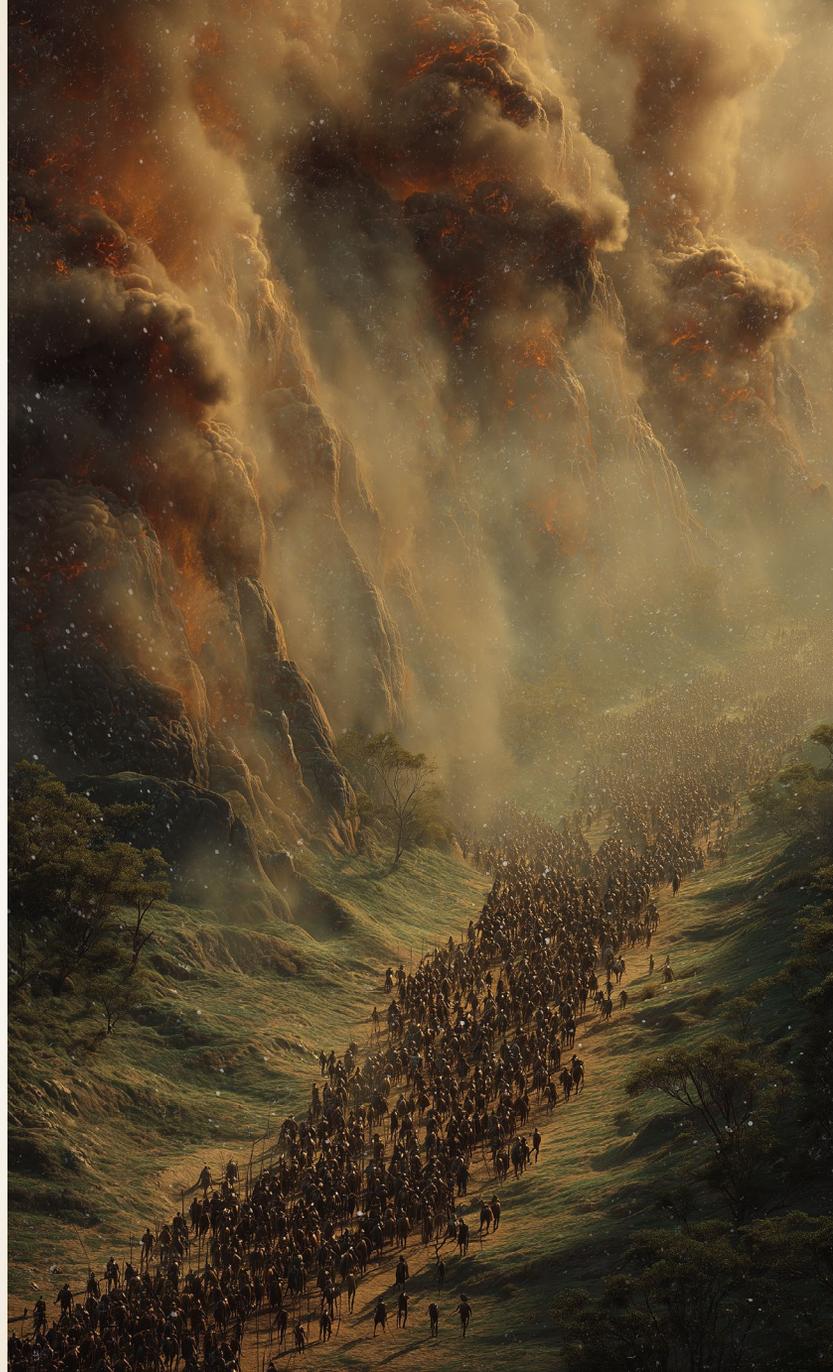
– *The death motif in the novel*

"At some point, Tazio and his took a gondola, and Aschenbach, hidden from their sight by a well, did the same when they had left. He talked in an abrupt and muffled voice when he ordered the gondolier, promising a hefty tip, to follow discreetly that gondola that was just turning the corner; and he was overjoyed when the man, with the roguish servility of the opportunist, replied to him in the same tone that he would be served, and served well. So he floated, seated on soft black cushions, behind that other ebony barge, to which he was attracted by his passion. Sometimes he lost track of it: then he experienced grief and despair. But his gondolier, apparently experienced in such things, was always able to catch up with it by taking shortcuts. The air was calm and smelly, the Sun glowed through the haze, the sky was shale-coloured. The waves clashed against wood and stone."



"That night he had a terrible nightmare—if a mental and corporeal experience can be called that. It happened in deep sleep and complete independence and sensual presence, but without himself being part of the proceedings; the scene was his soul itself and the events intruded violently from outside, subduing his deep mental resistance, went through and left his existence, the culture of his life, in shambles. Fear was the beginning, fear and lust and a horrified curiosity of what would be coming. It was night; and his senses were listening intently; because from awaya commotion, a noise, a din approached: a rattling, a clashing, a muffled thunder, shrill cheers and a howling of an "oo" sound, all mixed and sweetly drowned in a terrible way with deep-sounding and continual flute-playing, which cast anobtrusive spell on the entrails. And he saw a phrase, dark, but denoting what was coming: "The alien God!" Smoky fervency was smolde ring; there he recognized the mountains, similar to the ones surrounding his summer house. And in the spotty light, from woody hills, between trunks and mossy boulders it thundered earthward like a vortex: men, animals, a swarm, a raging horde and flooded the place with bodies, flames, tumult, and a lurching dance."

– *The dream motif in the novel*



"In his parents' house, many years ago, there had been an hourglass—he suddenly saw the frail and important device again as if it stood before his eyes. Silently and finely the rust-coloured sand traversed the glassy bottleneck, and since it was becoming less in the upper half, a small torrential vortex had formed there. /.../ At the edge of the water he remained, drawing figures into the sand with his toes, his gaze fixed at the ground. Then he crossed the shallow sea that reached up to his knees in its deepest parts and arrived at the sandbank. There he stood for a moment, looking into the distance and then wandered slowly towards the left. Separated from terra firma by a gulf of water, separated from his companions by his pride, he ambled as a distinct and unconnected figure in the sea, in the wind, before the misty boundless space."

— *Near the end of the novel*



*Mario
and
the Magician*

"Picture a thickset youth of twenty years, with clipt hair, a low forehead, and heavy-lidded eyes of an indefinite grey, shot with green and yellow. /.../ There was a saddle of freckles on the flat nose, the whole upper half of the face retreated behind the lower, and that again was dominated by thick lips that parted to show the salivated teeth. These thick lips and the veiled look of the eyes lent the whole face a primitive melancholy-it was that which had drawn us to him from the first. In it was not the faintest trace of brutality-indeed, his hands would have given the lie to such an idea, being unusually slender and delicate even for a southerner. They were hands by which one liked being served."



"Torre di Venere lies some fifteen kilometres from Portoclemente, one of the most popular summer resorts on the Tyrrhenian Sea. /.../ It is no longer the thing to go to Portoclemente-though still so much the thing that it is as noisy and crowded as ever. One goes next door, so to speak: to Torre. So much more refined, even, and cheaper to boot."



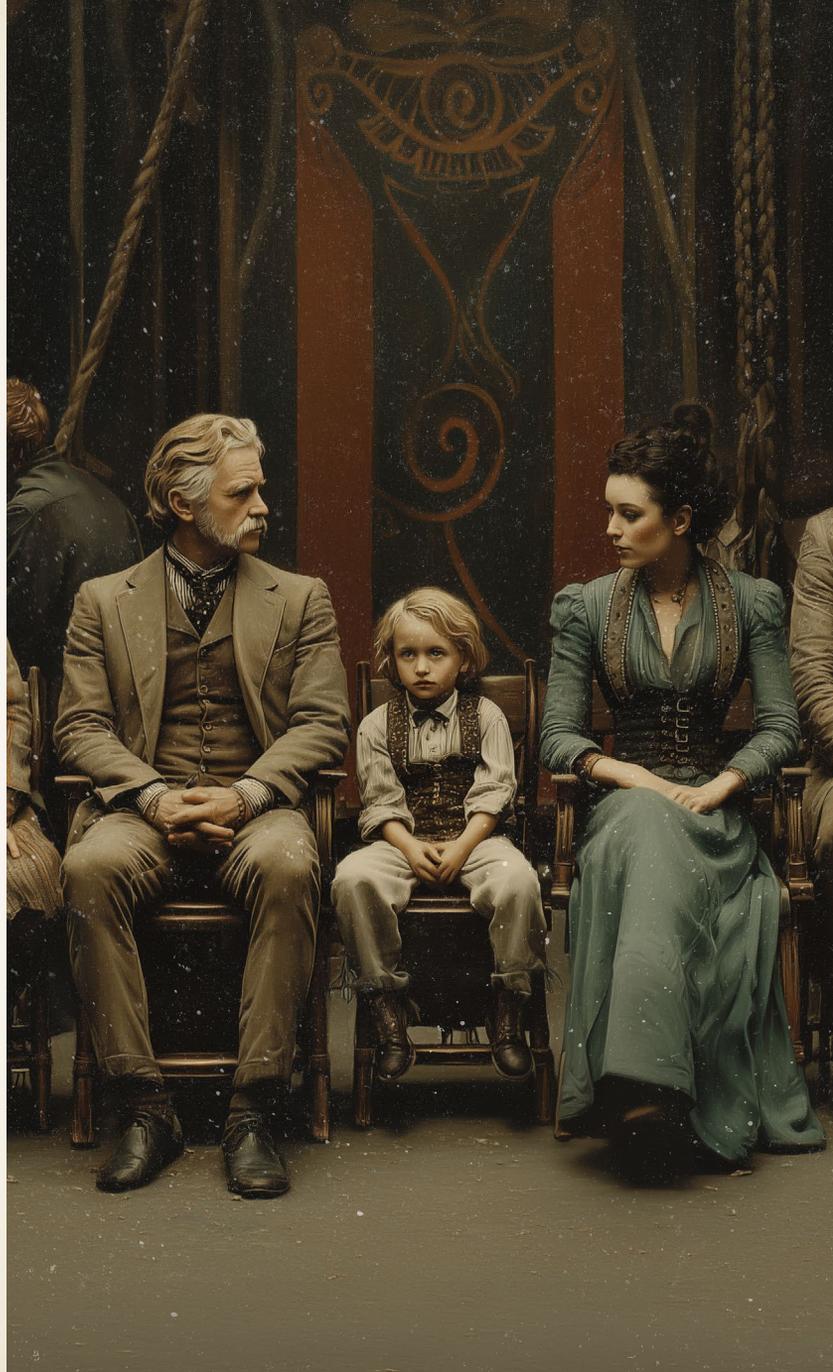
"Its gay and busy main street of shops and hotels runs down to a wide sandy beach covered with tents and pennanted sand-castles and sunburnt -humanity, where at all times a lively social bustle reigns, and much noise. But this same spacious and inviting fine-sanded beach, this same border of pine grove and near, presiding mountains, continues all the way along the coast."



"The Cavaliere's performance was to take place in a hall where during the season there had been a cinema with a weekly programme. We had never been there. You reached it by following the main street under the wall of the "palazzo," a ruin with a "For sale" sign, that suggested a castle and had obviously been built in lordlier days. In the same street were the chemist, the hairdresser, and all the better shops; it led, so to speak, from the feudal past the bourgeois into the proletarian, for it ended off between two rows of poor fishing-huts, where old women sat mending nets before the doors. And here, among the proletariat, was the hall, not much more, actually than a wooden shed, though a large one, with a turreted entrance, plastered on either side with layers of gay placards."



"It had got to a quarter past nine, it got to almost half past. It was natural that we should be nervous. When would the children get to bed? It had been a mistake to bring them, for now it would be very hard to suggest breaking off their enjoyment before it had got well under way."

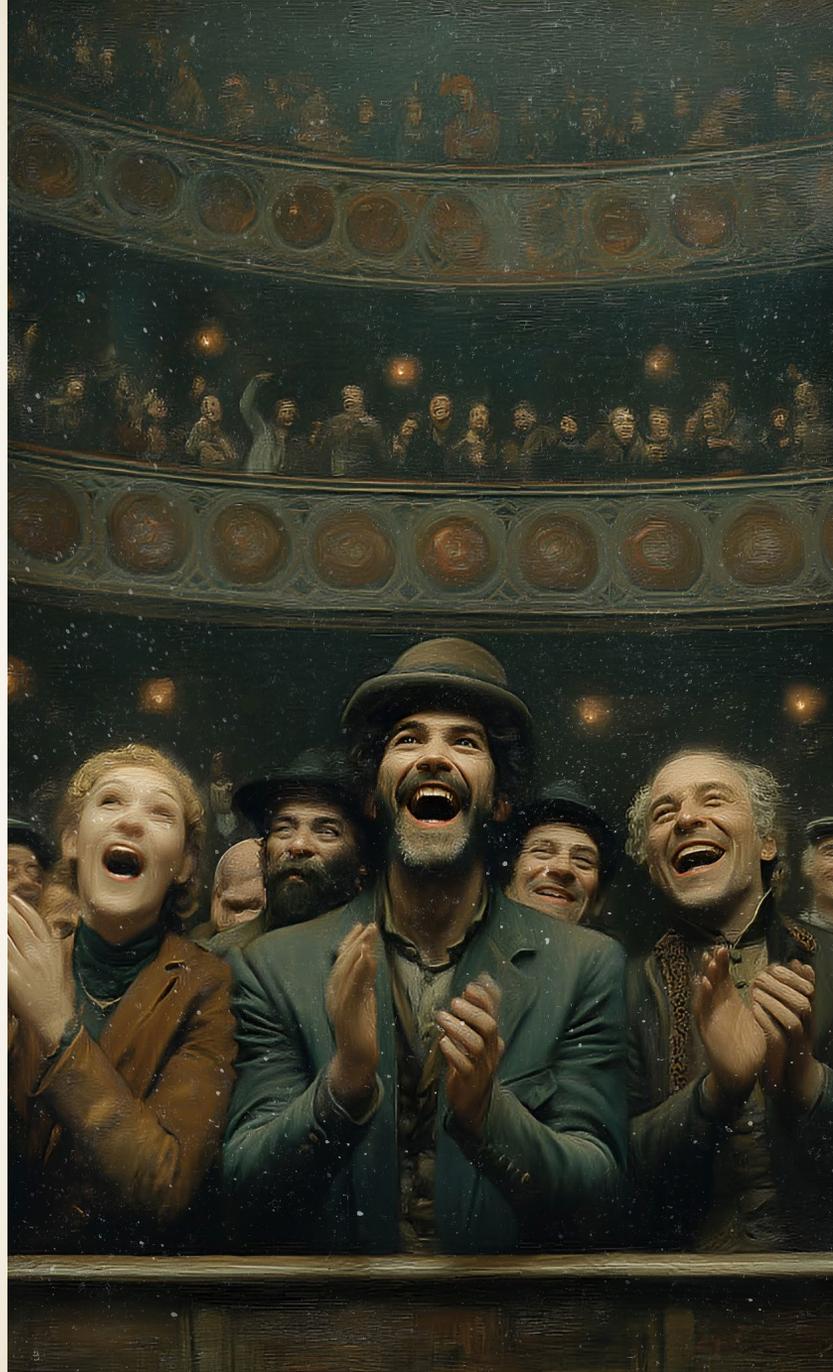


"As he stood there, his small hard eyes, with flabby pouches beneath them, roved appraisingly about the hall, not quickly, rather in a considered examination, pausing here and there upon a face with his lips clipped together, not speaking a word. Then with a display of skill as surprising as it was casual, he rolled his gloves into a ball and tossed them across a considerable distance into the glass on the table. Next from an inner pocket he drew forth a packet of cigarettes; you could see by the wrapper that they were the cheapest sort the government sells. With his fingertips he pulled out a cigarette and lighted it, without looking, from a quick firing benzine lighter. He drew the smoke deep into his lungs and let it out again, tapping his foot, with both lips drawn in an arrogant grimace and the grey smoke streaming out between broken and saw edged teeth."

"God knows whether they told the truth or whether they wanted to make game of Cipolla. Anyhow, the latter was far from sharing the general merriment which their confession aroused. He was insulted and disgusted. He sat there on a straw bottomed chair in the centre of the stage with his legs crossed, smoking a fresh cigarette out of his cheap packet; obviously it tasted the better for the cognac he had indulged in while the yokels were stumping up the steps. Again he inhaled the smoke and let it stream out between curling lips. Swinging his leg, with his gaze sternly averted from the two shamelessly chuckling creatures and from the audience as well, he stared into space as one who withdraws himself and his dignity from the contemplation of an utterly despicable phenomenon."



"The scene had been followed with tense interest and applauded at the end; there were shouts of "Bravo, Cipolla!" and "Bravo, giovanotto!" Apparently the issue of the duel was not looked upon as a personal defeat for the young man. Rather the audience encouraged him as one does an actor who succeeds in an unsympathetic role. Certainly his way of screwing himself up with cramp had been highly picturesque, its appeal was directly calculated to impress the gallery in short, a fine dramatic performance."



"Cippola drew a pin set with a stone out of its hiding-place in an English-woman's shoe, carried it, halting and pressing on by turns, to another lady Signora Angiolieri..."



"Still less can I forget the touching scene, at once comic and horrible, with Signora Angiolieri. The Cavaliere, probably in his first bold survey of the room, had spied out her ethereal lack of resistance to his power."



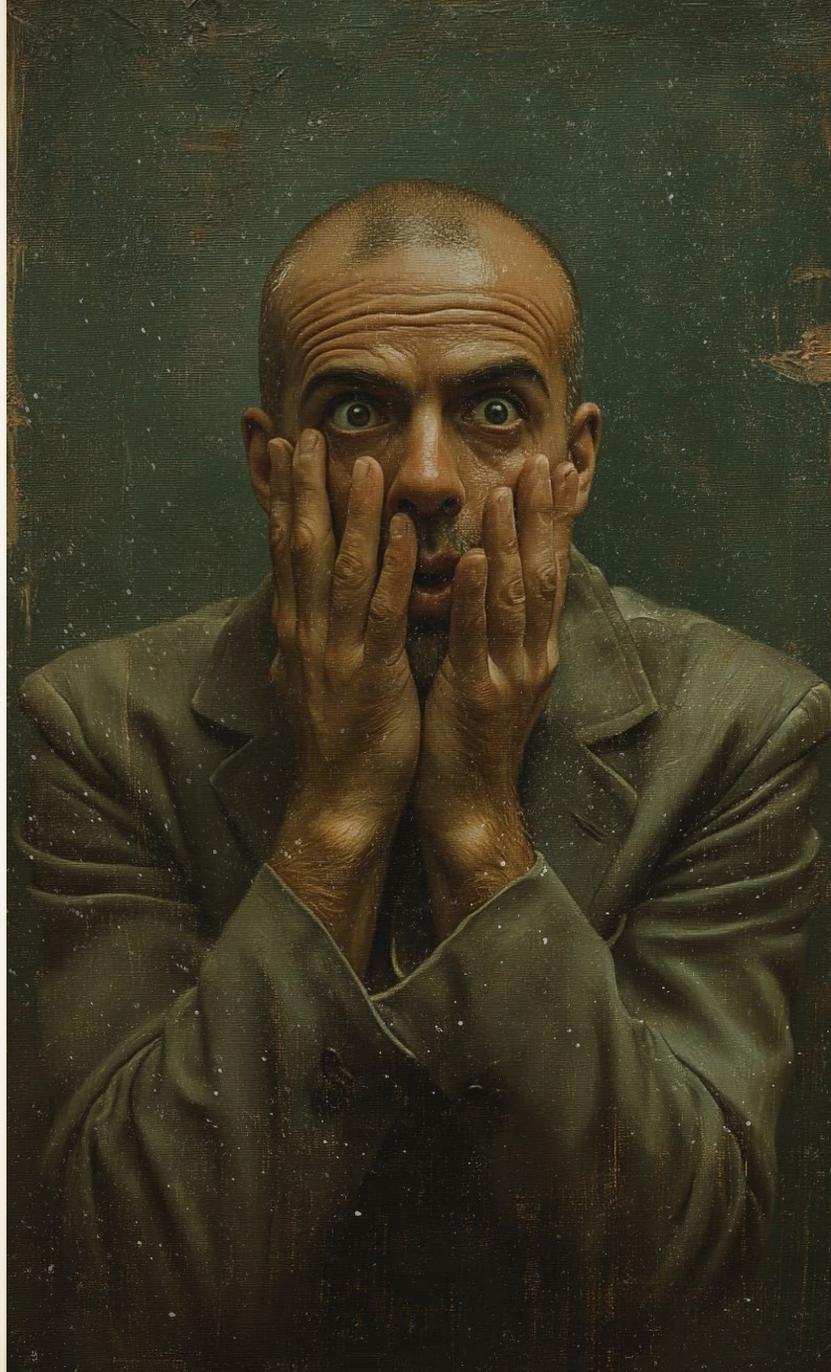
"Let me state once for all that this self-confident cripple was the most powerful hypnotist I have ever seen in my life."



"So now he mounted the platform, and a single cut of the whip was enough to make him dance to the Cavaliere's orders, in a kind of complacent ecstasy, eyes closed, head nodding, lank limbs flying in all directions. /.../ And other recruits were not long in coming forward: two other young men, one humbly and one well dressed, were soon jigging alongside the first."



"But now the gentleman from Rome bobbed up again, asking defiantly if the Cavaliere would engage to make him dance too, even against his will. /.../ His opponent did not stir. "Balla!" repeated the Cavaliere incisively, and snapped his whip. You saw the young man move his neck round in his collar; at the same time one hand lifted slightly at the wrist, one ankle turned outward. But that was all, for the time at least; merely a tendency to twitch, now sternly repressed, now seeming about to get the upper hand..."





This book design presents illustrations of Thomas Mann's short stories *Death in Venice* and *Mario and the Wizard* accompanied by quotes from the pictures taken from the short stories. The illustrations simultaneously speak in the voice of the 21st century and evoke the 1910s, promising an exciting adventure for young people who read little and grew up on movies and the internet. The aim of the images is to arouse the reader's curiosity and bring them closer to the times and stories they evoke.

Judit Imre