

DEATH IN VENICE

and Seven Other Stories by

THOMAS MANN

Mario and the Magician

Disorder and Early Sorrow

A Man and His Dog

Felix Krull

The Blood of the Walsungs

Tristan

Tonio Kröger

Thomas Mann.

DEATH
IN
VENICE

AND
Seven Other Stories

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

by H. T. Lowe-Porter



NEW YORK

VINTAGE BOOKS

A DIVISION OF RANDOM HOUSE

VINTAGE BOOKS EDITION, SEPTEMBER 1954

Copyright 1930, 1931, 1936 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
Copyright renewed 1958, 1959, 1963
by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. Published in the United States by Random House, Inc., New York, and simultaneously in Canada by Random House of Canada Limited, Toronto. Originally published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Manufactured in the United States of America

THOMAS MANN was born in Germany in 1875. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1929, and left Germany for good in 1933. Among his major novels are *BUDDENBROOKS* (1901), *THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN* (1924), the tetralogy *JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS* (1933, 1934, 1936, 1943), and *DOCTOR FAUSTUS* (1948). He is equally well known for his short stories and essays.

He died in Zurich in 1955.

VINTAGE BELLES—LETTRES

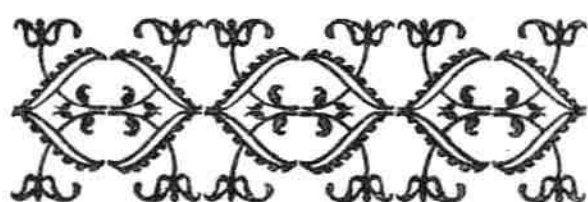
- V-418 AUDEN, W. H. / The Dyer's Hand
V-887 AUDEN, W. H. / Forewords and Afterwords
V-271 BEDIER, JOSEPH / Tristan and Iseult
V-512 BLOCH, MARC / The Historian's Craft
V-572 BRIDGEHAMPTON / Bridgehampton Works & Days
V-161 BROWN, NORMAN O. / Closing Time
V-544 BROWN, NORMAN O. / Hermes the Thief
V-419 BROWN, NORMAN O. / Love's Body
V-75 CAMUS, ALBERT / The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays
V-30 CAMUS, ALBERT / The Rebel
V-608 CARR, JOHN DICKSON / The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle:
The Man Who Was Sherlock Holmes
V-407 HARDWICK, ELIZABETH / Seduction and Betrayal: Women
and Literature
V-244 HERRIGEL, EUGEN / The Method of Zen
V-663 HERRIGEL, EUGEN / Zen In the Art of Archery
V-201 HUGHES, H. STUART / Consciousness & Society
V-235 KAPLAN, ABRAHAM / New World of Philosophy
V-337 KAUFMANN, WALTER (trans.) AND FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE /
Beyond Good and Evil
V-369 KAUFMANN, WALTER (trans.) AND FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE /
The Birth of Tragedy and the Case of Wagner
V-985 KAUFMANN, WALTER (trans.) AND FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE /
The Gay Science
V-401 KAUFMANN, WALTER (trans.) AND FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE /
On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo
V-437 KAUFMANN, WALTER (trans.) AND FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE /
The Will to Power
V-995 KOTT, JAN / The Eating of the Gods: An Interpretation of
Greek Tragedy
V-685 LESSING, DORIS / A Small Personal Voice: Essays, Reviews,
Interviews
V-329 LINDBERGH, ANNE MORROW / Gift from the Sea
V-479 MALRAUX, ANDRE / Man's Fate
V-406 MARCUS, STEVEN / Engels, Manchester and the Working
Class
V-58 MENCKEN, H. L. / Prejudices (Selected by James T. Farrell)
V-25 MENCKEN, H. L. / The Vintage Mencken (Gathered by Ali-
stair Cooke)
V-151 MOFFAT, MARY JANE AND CHARLOTTE PAINTER (eds.) /
Revelations: Diaries of Women
V-926 MUSTARD, HELEN (trans.) / Heinrich Heine: Selected Works
V-337 NIETZSCHE, FRIEDRICH AND WALTER KAUFMANN (trans.) /
Beyond Good and Evil
V-369 NIETZSCHE, FRIEDRICH AND WALTER KAUFMANN (trans.) /
The Birth of Tragedy and the Case of Wagner
V-985 NIETZSCHE, FRIEDRICH AND WALTER KAUFMANN (trans.) /
The Gay Science
V-401 NIETZSCHE, FRIEDRICH AND WALTER KAUFMANN (trans.) /
On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo

- V-437 **NIETZSCHE, FRIEDRICH AND WALTER KAUFMANN (trans.) /**
The Will to Power
- V-672 **OUSPENSKY, P. D. /** The Fourth Way
- V-524 **OUSPENSKY, P. D. /** A New Model of the Universe
- V-943 **OUSPENSKY, P. D. /** The Psychology of Man's Possible Evolution
- V-639 **OUSPENSKY, P. D. /** Tertium Organum
- V-151 **PAINTER, CHARLOTTE AND MARY JANE MOFFAT (eds.) /**
Revelations: Diaries of Women
- V-986 **PAUL, DAVID (trans.) /** Poison & Vision: Poems & Prose of
Baudelaire, Mallarme and Rimbaud
- V-598 **PROUST, MARCEL /** The Captive
- V-597 **PROUST, MARCEL /** Cities of the Plain
- V-596 **PROUST, MARCEL /** The Guermantes Way
- V-594 **PROUST, MARCEL /** Swann's Way
- V-599 **PROUST, MARCEL /** The Sweet Cheat Gone
- V-595 **PROUST, MARCEL /** Within a Budding Grove
- V-899 **SAMUEL, MAURICE /** The World of Sholom Aleichem
- V-415 **SHATTUCK, ROGER /** The Banquet Years (revised)
- V-278 **STEVENS, WALLACE /** The Necessary Angel
- V-761 **WATTS, ALAN /** Behold the Spirit
- V-923 **WATTS, ALAN /** Beyond Theology: The Art of Godmanship
- V-853 **WATTS, ALAN /** The Book: the Taboo Against Knowing Who
You Are
- V-999 **WATTS, ALAN /** Cloud-Hidden, Whereabouts Unknown: A
Mountain Journal
- V-665 **WATTS, ALAN /** Does It Matter?
- V-951 **WATTS, ALAN /** In My Own Way
- V-299 **WATTS, ALAN /** The Joyous Cosmology
- V-592 **WATTS, ALAN /** Nature, Man and Woman
- V-609 **WATTS, ALAN /** Psychotherapy East & West
- V-835 **WATTS, ALAN /** The Supreme Identity
- V-298 **WATTS, ALAN /** The Way of Zen
- V-870 **WIESEL, ELIE /** Souls on Fire

CONTENTS

<i>Death in Venice</i>	PAGE 3
<i>Tonio Kröger</i>	76
<i>Mario and the Magician</i>	135
<i>Disorder and Early Sorrow</i>	182
<i>A Man and his Dog</i>	217
<i>The Blood of the Walsungs</i>	292
<i>Tristan</i>	320
<i>Felix Krull</i>	360

DEATH IN VENICE
AND
SEVEN OTHER STORIES



DEATH IN VENICE

GUSTAVE ASCHENBACH—or von Aschenbach, as he had been known officially since his fiftieth birthday—had set out alone from his house in Prince Regent Street, Munich, for an extended walk. It was a spring afternoon in that year of grace 19—, when Europe sat upon the anxious seat beneath a menace that hung over its head for months. Aschenbach had sought the open soon after tea. He was overwrought by a morning of hard, nerve-taxing work, work which had not ceased to exact his uttermost in the way of sustained concentration, conscientiousness, and tact; and after the noon meal found himself powerless to check the onward sweep of the productive mechanism within him, that *motus animi continuus* in which, according to Cicero, eloquence resides. He had sought but not found relaxation in sleep—though the wear and tear upon his system had come to make a daily nap more and more imperative—and now undertook a walk, in the hope that air and exercise might send him back refreshed to a good evening's work.

May had begun, and after weeks of cold and wet a mock summer had set in. The English Gardens, though in tenderest leaf, felt as sultry as in August and were full of vehicles and pedestrians near the city. But towards Aumeister the paths were solitary and still, and Aschenbach strolled thither, stopping awhile to watch the lively crowds in the restaurant garden with its fringe of carriages and cabs. Thence he took his homeward way outside the park and across the sunset fields. By the time he reached the North Cemetery, however, he felt tired, and

a storm was brewing above Föhring; so he waited at the stopping-place for a tram to carry him back to the city.

He found the neighbourhood quite empty. Not a wagon in sight, either on the paved Ungererstrasse, with its gleaming tramlines stretching off towards Schwabing, nor on the Föhring Highway. Nothing stirred behind the hedge in the stone-mason's yard, where crosses, monuments, and commemorative tablets made a supernumerary and untenanted graveyard opposite the real one. The mortuary chapel, a structure in Byzantine style, stood facing it, silent in the gleam of the ebbing day. Its façade was adorned with Greek crosses and tinted hieratic designs, and displayed a symmetrically arranged selection of scriptural texts in gilded letters, all of them with a bearing upon the future life, such as: "They are entering into the House of the Lord" and "May the Light Everlasting shine upon them." Aschenbach beguiled some minutes of his waiting with reading these formulas and letting his mind's eye lose itself in their mystical meaning. He was brought back to reality by the sight of a man standing in the portico, above the two apocalyptic beasts that guarded the staircase, and something not quite usual in this man's appearance gave his thoughts a fresh turn.

Whether he had come out of the hall through the bronze doors or mounted unnoticed from outside, it was impossible to tell. Aschenbach casually inclined to the first idea. He was of medium height, thin, beardless, and strikingly snub-nosed; he belonged to the red-haired type and possessed its milky, freckled skin. He was obviously not Bavarian; and the broad, straight-brimmed straw hat he had on even made him look distinctly exotic. True, he had the indigenous rucksack buckled on his back, wore a belted suit of yellowish woollen stuff, apparently frieze, and carried a grey mackintosh cape across his left forearm, which was propped against his waist. In his right hand, slantwise to the ground, he held an iron-shod stick, and braced himself against its crook, with his legs crossed. His chin was up, so that the Adam's apple looked very bald in the lean neck rising from the loose shirt; and he stood there sharply peering up into space out of colour-

less, red-lashed eyes, while two pronounced perpendicular furrows showed on his forehead in curious contrast to his little turned-up nose. Perhaps his heightened and heightening position helped out the impression Aschenbach received. At any rate, standing there as though at survey, the man had a bold and domineering, even a ruthless air, and his lips completed the picture by seeming to curl back, either by reason of some deformity or else because he grimaced, being blinded by the sun in his face; they laid bare the long, white, glistening teeth to the gums.

Aschenbach's gaze, though unawares, had very likely been inquisitive and tactless; for he became suddenly conscious that the stranger was returning it, and indeed so directly, with such hostility, such plain intent to force the withdrawal of the other's eyes, that Aschenbach felt an unpleasant twinge and, turning his back, began to walk along the hedge, hastily resolving to give the man no further heed. He had forgotten him the next minute. Yet whether the pilgrim air the stranger wore kindled his fantasy or whether some other physical or psychical influence came in play, he could not tell; but he felt the most surprising consciousness of a widening of inward barriers, a kind of vaulting unrest, a youthfully ardent thirst for distant scenes—a feeling so lively and so new, or at least so long ago outgrown and forgot, that he stood there rooted to the spot, his eyes on the ground and his hands clasped behind him, exploring these sentiments of his, their bearing and scope.

True, what he felt was no more than a longing to travel; yet coming upon him with such suddenness and passion as to resemble a seizure, almost a hallucination. Desire projected itself visually: his fancy, not quite yet lulled since morning, imaged the marvels and terrors of the manifold earth. He saw. He beheld a landscape, a tropical marshland, beneath a reeking sky, steaming, monstrous, rank—a kind of primeval wilderness-world of islands, morasses, and alluvial channels. Hairy palm-trunks rose near and far out of lush brakes of fern, out of bottoms of crass vegetation, fat, swollen, thick with incredible bloom. There were trees, mis-shapen as a dream,

that dropped their naked roots straight through the air into the ground or into water that was stagnant and shadowy and glassy-green, where mammoth milk-white blossoms floated, and strange high-shouldered birds with curious bills stood gazing sidewise without sound or stir. Among the knotted joints of a bamboo thicket the eyes of a crouching tiger gleamed—and he felt his heart throb with terror, yet with a longing inexplicable. Then the vision vanished. Aschenbach, shaking his head, took up his march once more along the hedge of the stone-mason's yard.

He had, at least ever since he commanded means to get about the world at will, regarded travel as a necessary evil, to be endured now and again willy-nilly for the sake of one's health. Too busy with the tasks imposed upon him by his own ego and the European soul, too laden with the care and duty to create, too preoccupied to be an amateur of the gay outer world, he had been content to know as much of the earth's surface as he could without stirring far outside his own sphere—had, indeed, never even been tempted to leave Europe. Now more than ever, since his life was on the wane, since he could no longer brush aside as fanciful his artist fear of not having done, of not being finished before the works ran down, he had confined himself to close range, had hardly stepped outside the charming city which he had made his home and the rude country house he had built in the mountains, whither he went to spend the rainy summers.

And so the new impulse which thus late and suddenly swept over him was speedily made to conform to the pattern of self-discipline he had followed from his youth up. He had meant to bring his work, for which he lived, to a certain point before leaving for the country, and the thought of a leisurely ramble across the globe, which should take him away from his desk for months, was too fantastic and upsetting to be seriously entertained. Yet the source of the unexpected contagion was known to him only too well. This yearning for new and distant scenes, this craving for freedom, release, forgetfulness—they

were, he admitted to himself, an impulse towards flight, flight from the spot which was the daily theatre of a rigid, cold, and passionate service. That service he loved, had even almost come to love the enervating daily struggle between a proud, tenacious, well-trying will and this growing fatigue, which no one must suspect, nor the finished product betray by any faintest sign that his inspiration could ever flag or miss fire. On the other hand, it seemed the part of common sense not to span the bow too far, not to suppress summarily a need that so unequivocally asserted itself. He thought of his work, and the place where yesterday and again today he had been forced to lay it down, since it would not yield either to patient effort, or a swift *coup de main*. Again and again he had tried to break or untie the knot—only to retire at last from the attack with a shiver of repugnance. Yet the difficulty was actually not a great one; what sapped his strength was distaste for the task, betrayed by a fastidiousness he could no longer satisfy. In his youth, indeed, the nature and inmost essence of the literary gift had been, to him, this very scrupulosity; for it he had bridled and tempered his sensibilities, knowing full well that feeling is prone to be content with easy gains and blithe half-perfection. So now, perhaps, feeling, thus tyrannized, avenged itself by leaving him, refusing from now on to carry and wing his art and taking away with it all the ecstasy he had known in form and expression. Not that he was doing bad work. So much, at least, the years had brought him, that at any moment he might feel tranquilly assured of mastery. But he got no joy of it—not though a nation paid it homage. To him it seemed his work had ceased to be marked by that fiery play of fancy which is the product of joy, and more, and more potently, than any intrinsic content, forms in turn the joy of the receiving world. He dreaded the summer in the country, alone with the maid who prepared his food and the man who served him; dreaded to see the familiar mountain peaks and walls that would shut him up again with his heavy discontent. What he needed was a break, an interim existence, a means of passing time, other air and a new stock of

blood, to make the summer tolerable and productive. Good, then, he would go a journey. Not far—not all the way to the tigers. A night in a *wagon-lit*, three or four weeks of lotus-eating at some one of the gay world's playgrounds in the lovely south. . . .

So ran his thoughts, while the clang of the electric tram drew nearer down the Ungererstrasse; and as he mounted the platform he decided to devote the evening to a study of maps and railway guides. Once in, he bethought him to look back after the man in the straw hat, the companion of this brief interval which had after all been so fruitful. But he was not in his former place, nor in the tram itself, nor yet at the next stop; in short, his whereabouts remained a mystery.

Gustave Aschenbach was born at L—, a country town in the province of Silesia. He was the son of an upper official in the judicature, and his forbears had all been officers, judges, departmental functionaries—men who lived their strict, decent, sparing lives in the service of king and state. Only once before had a livelier mentality—in the quality of a clergyman—turned up among them; but swifter, more perceptive blood had in the generation before the poet's flowed into the stock from the mother's side, she being the daughter of a Bohemian musical conductor. It was from her he had the foreign traits that betrayed themselves in his appearance. The union of dry, conscientious officialdom and ardent, obscure impulse, produced an artist—and this particular artist: author of the lucid and vigorous prose epic on the life of Frederick the Great; careful, tireless weaver of the richly patterned tapestry entitled *Maia*, a novel that gathers up the threads of many human destinies in the warp of a single idea; creator of that powerful narrative *The Subject*, which taught a whole grateful generation that a man can still be capable of moral resolution even after he has plumbed the depths of knowledge; and lastly—to complete the tale of works of his mature period—the writer of that impassioned discourse on the theme of Mind and Art whose ordered force and antithetic eloquence led serious

critics to rank it with Schiller's *Simple and Sentimental Poetry*.

Aschenbach's whole soul, from the very beginning, was bent on fame—and thus, while not precisely precocious, yet thanks to the unmistakable trenchancy of his personal accent he was early ripe and ready for a career. Almost before he was out of high school he had a name. Ten years later he had learned to sit at his desk and sustain and live up to his growing reputation, to write gracious and pregnant phrases in letters that must needs be brief, for many claims press upon the solid and successful man. At forty, worn down by the strains and stresses of his actual task, he had to deal with a daily post heavy with tributes from his own and foreign countries.

Remote on one hand from the banal, on the other from the eccentric, his genius was calculated to win at once the adhesion of the general public and the admiration, both sympathetic and stimulating, of the connoisseur. From childhood up he was pushed on every side to achievement, and achievement of no ordinary kind; and so his young days never knew the sweet idleness and blithe *laissez aller* that belong to youth. A nice observer once said of him in company—it was at the time when he fell ill in Vienna in his thirty-fifth year: "You see, Aschenbach has always lived liked this"—here the speaker closed the fingers of his left hand to a fist—"never like this"—and he let his open hand hang relaxed from the back of his chair. It was apt. And this attitude was the more morally valiant in that Aschenbach was not by nature robust—he was only called to the constant tension of his career, not actually born to it.

By medical advice he had been kept from school and educated at home. He had grown up solitary, without comradeship; yet had early been driven to see that he belonged to those whose talent is not so much out of the common as is the physical basis on which talent relies for its fulfilment. It is a seed that gives early of its fruit, whose powers seldom reach a ripe old age. But his favourite motto was "Hold fast"; indeed, in his novel on the life of Frederick the Great he envisaged nothing else

than the apotheosis of the old hero's word of command, "*Durchhalten*," which seemed to him the epitome of fortitude under suffering. Besides, he deeply desired to live to a good old age, for it was his conviction that only the artist to whom it has been granted to be fruitful on all stages of our human scene can be truly great, or universal, or worthy of honour.

Bearing the burden of his genius, then, upon such slender shoulders and resolved to go so far, he had the more need of discipline—and discipline, fortunately, was his native inheritance from the father's side. At forty, at fifty, he was still living as he had commenced to live in the years when others are prone to waste and revel, dream high thoughts and postpone fulfilment. He began his day with a cold shower over chest and back; then, setting a pair of tall wax candles in silver holders at the head of his manuscript, he sacrificed to art, in two or three hours of almost religious fervour, the powers he had assembled in sleep. Outsiders might be pardoned for believing that his *Maia* world and the epic amplitude revealed by the life of Frederick were a manifestation of great power working under high pressure, that they came forth, as it were, all in one breath. It was the more triumph for his morale; for the truth was that they were heaped up to greatness in layer after layer, in long days of work, out of hundreds and hundreds of single inspirations; they owed their excellence, both of mass and detail, to one thing and one alone; that their creator could hold out for years under the strain of the same piece of work, with an endurance and a tenacity of purpose like that which had conquered his native province of Silesia, devoting to actual composition none but his best and freshest hours.

For an intellectual product of any value to exert an immediate influence which shall also be deep and lasting, it must rest on an inner harmony, yes, an affinity, between the personal destiny of its author and that of his contemporaries in general. Men do not know why they award fame to one work of art rather than another. Without being in the faintest connoisseurs, they think to