

Brief Interviews with Hideous Men

By David Foster Wallace

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David Foster Wallace made an art of taking readers into places no other writer even gets near. The series of stories from which this exuberantly acclaimed book takes its title is a sequence of imagined interviews with men on the subject of their relations with women. These portraits of men at their most self-justifying, loquacious, and benighted explore poignantly and hilariously the agonies of sexual connections.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
David Foster Wallace is one of those either-love-him-or-hate-him kind of writers, but most of the subjects in his collection are--as the title suggests--worthy of contempt. On this audiocassette, DFW, as he's known to his fans, reads a selection of his works from the book of the same name. The fictional "interviews" are brief forays into the minds of men via questions that are signaled with a verbal "Q," but never actually asked. While he reads those pieces in the voices of the interviewees, Wallace reads the rest of the collection--a handful of short stories--with the self-conscious lack of emotion commonly used by poets. Don't look for plot or action here; it's strictly character sketches with a good dose of verbal gymnastics. And don't expect to like most of the characters; it's clear the author doesn't either. (Running time: 3 hours, 2 cassettes) --*Kimberly Heinrichs*

From Publishers Weekly
Wallace, the young turk author whose ubernovel, Infinite Jest, was way too bulky for audio adaptation, throws himself gamely into the medium now, reading from his short fiction collection. In this audio debut, Wallace delivers his spry, satiric exercises in a sure-voiced, confident baritone. With the skill of a veteran narrator, he adeptly retains footing as he navigates his complex and wordy prose. His literary grab-bag trademarks include off-kilter descriptive passages, ponderous lists and footnotes, and a large portion of the tape is devoted to a one-sided interview with a psychotic sexual stalker. These odd tropes come across with humor, even tenderness, in Wallace's sensitive reading. He conveys the earnestness of a young, hardworking writer, eager to make his eccentric vision accessible through its spoken presentation. It's this sense of Wallace's strong desire to be appealing that will keep the listener with him throughout his sometimes difficult material. Simultaneous release with the Little, Brown hardcover. (May)
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From Library Journal
Following the success of his massive, much-acclaimed novel, Infinite Jest (LJ 1/96), Wallace returns to fiction with a similarly dense, cerebral, and self-reflexive set of short works. Wallace's characters are psychological grotesques, emotionally detached and sometimes, as with the na?ve young wife in "Adult World," finding an odd freedom in their distance. While the inauthenticity of male/female relations is a recurrent motif, the central theme is the nature of narrative itself, as in "Octet," where the author turns self-reflexiveness on itself, creating something that might be termed meta-meta-fiction. Fans of Thomas Pynchon and Donald Barthelme will find comparable challenges here. For libraries where Infinite Jest was popular.ALawrence Rungren, Merrimack Valley Lib. Consortium, Andover, MA
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Joseph Asher:

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