



Double Happiness: Stories

Mary-Beth Hughes

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Best-selling author Mary-Beth Hughes delivers a seductive, deeply human, and sophisticated collection about the universal need to be loved, and the complicated imperfections that jeopardize the ties that bind us.

The stories in *Double Happiness* are extraordinary portrayals of the ordinariness of life. By pinpointing those moments of discord when personal needs and morality clash with circumstances beyond our control, Hughes challenges our concepts of responsibility, trust, resilience, and betrayal. In “Pelican Song,” a thirty-year-old modern dancer who moonlights as a movie–ticket taker visits her parent’s picturesque home to discover that her stepfather has begun mistreating her too-accommodating mother; “Horse” follows maladjusted honeymooners in Atlantic City whose romantic weekend is saved from emotional catastrophe by a horse that refuses to dive from its pedestal into the ocean; and a holiday in New York City turns from shopping sprees to a young girl’s sharp discovery of her father’s secret life in “Rome.”

With an elegant blend of humor and pathos, Hughes captures the turning points in relationships that make us wonder how well we really know those we love. *Double Happiness* is a revealing meditation on the fragility of contentment and the lengths we must go to in order to sustain it.

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