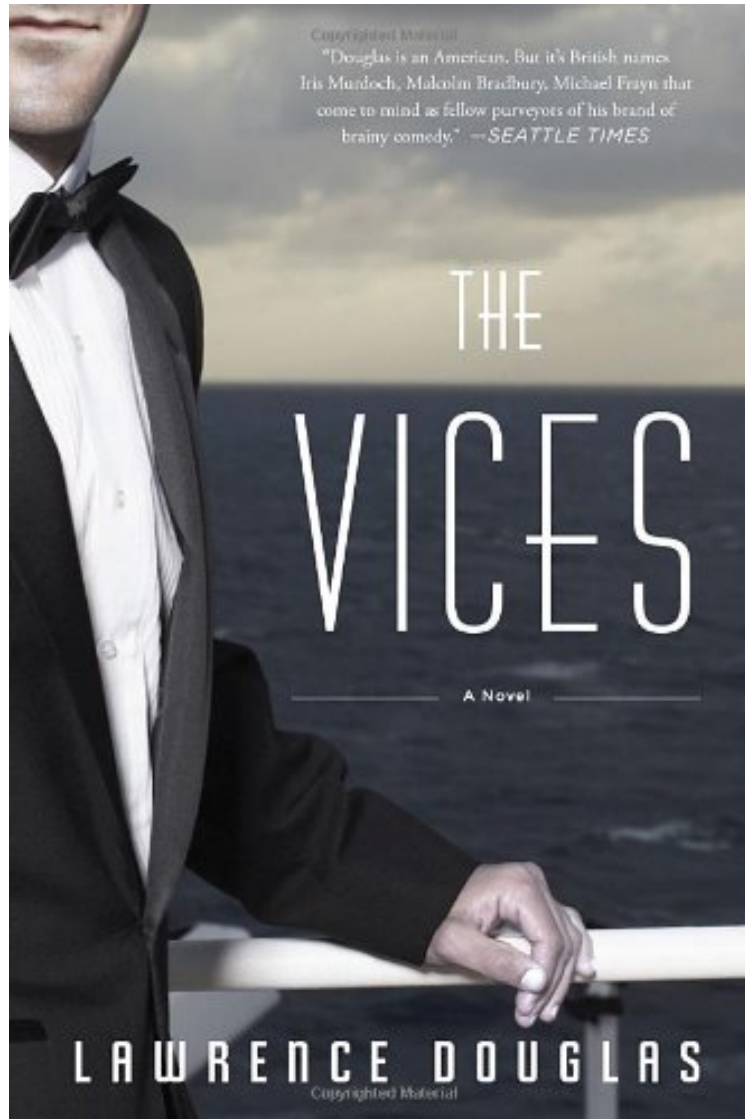


[Free pdf] The Vices

The Vices

Lawrence Douglas

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Lawrence Douglas : The Vices before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Vices:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. It would be a vice not to read VICESBy LectorThis novel is literally mesmerizing; it is good on so many levels that to put it down is to feel loss. It's a story about a brilliantly funny dysfunctional family; a tale of the intricate culture of academic life; a mystery about what happened to its main subject, a passenger on the QE2; a story about forbidden and hidden memories of the Second World War; a self-analysis by the narrator; a story of the varieties of love; and, I could go on. So, talk about getting a bang for your

bucks..... To top it off, it is written with skill and verve. It's good to know that the American novel remains in such good hands as those of Lawrence Douglas. 4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. funny and profound
By Monica Ringer I laughed, nodded as if to an inside joke, and thoroughly enjoyed Douglas' engaging and fresh style. But the book is more than the sum of its mysteries - the anguish of the characters, and their friendships, rings true and didn't leave me, long after the last page has been turned. 3 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Not so good
By Robert Weir Barrett I hoped for more. The narrative is quite gripping, at first, and the main characters have some interest to them. But after a time, it just seems to go on. But it isn't really an awful book; I've read worse. But the worst part, and the reason it gets only one star, is the horrible, shoddy job done editing this book. It is riddled with mistakes and questionable usage, stuff that a moderately talented editor should have caught. One example: pickles are called "gurkens" twice. What? No such word. Simple spell-checking would have nabbed this. And the book is FULL of similar errors. So don't waste your time on a this modest novel, unless you want to spend half your reading time editing.

Oliver Vice, forty-one, prominent philosopher, scholar, and art collector, is missing and presumed dead, over the side of Queen Mary 2. Troubled by his friend's possible suicide, the unnamed narrator of Lawrence Douglas' new novel launches an all-consuming investigation into Vice's life history. Douglas, moving backward through time, tells a mordantly humorous story of fascination turned obsession, as his narrator peels back the layers of the Vice family's rich and bizarre history. At the heart of the family are Francizka, Oliver's handsome, overbearing, vaguely anti-Semitic Hungarian mother, and his fraternal twin brother, Bartholomew, a gigantic and troubled young man with a morbid interest in Europe's great tyrants. As the narrator finds himself drawn into a battle over the family's money and art, he comes to sense that someone—or perhaps the entire family—is hiding an unsavory past. Pursuing the truth from New York to London, from Budapest to Portugal, he remains oblivious to the irony of the search: that in his need to understand Vice's life, he is really grappling with ambivalence about his own.

“The second novel by Lawrence Douglas gave me delight on every page. I'm always careful about calling something Nabokovian, mostly because I'll see that in a review and read the book in question and it's fine but not as good as Nabokov, you know? But this one is Nabokovian—there is no other word.” —Ed Park, *New York Magazine*, “The Year in Books”
“The Vices...is the sharp, stylish, suspenseful tale of Oliver Vice, a charismatic philosopher and art collector, and the provincial academic who falls under his spell. More than a campus novel, it is an elegant parable about the allure of self-invention.” —Adam Kirsch, *The New Statesman*, “Books of the year 2011”
“Playful and profound...As dazzlingly constructed as it is limpidly told, *The Vices* is a duplicitous delight that feels at home in this age of YouTube, e-mail, and the myriad other ways we consume and connect in this world...Lawrence Douglas gives conclusive evidence that he's the real thing.” —Ed Park, *Bookforum* “Smart...always fascinating...The novel's biggest concern is how we construct personal narratives that accommodate slippery and unsteady acts of memory.” —A.P.D. Lawrie, *Times Literary Supplement*
“In its deft exploration of the way identity, especially Jewish identity, is constructed and performed, *The Vices* does justice to its elegant Nabokovian inspiration.” —Adam Kirsch, *Tablet Magazine* “A good summer read...Making literal the phrase ‘literary sleuthing,’ [*The Vices*] combines the genres of academic and mystery novel.” —*The Buffalo News* “Douglas delivers a probing and skillful examination of the conundrums of identity...masterfully kaleidoscopic...[*The Vices*] presents the reader with a stunning new vista.” —*Publishers Weekly* “An intriguing, thought-provoking exploration of a man desperately unhappy to be living his own life.” —*Booklist* “Darkly comic...[Douglas] masterly crafts a family portrait, where the paint has cracked to reveal human truths.” —Royal Young, *Interview Magazine.com* “Douglas elaborates on the inherent tensions that make up the contested borders of identity...This mystery is deceptively philosophical and introspective.” —*Library Journal* “This brilliant, funny book will appeal to lovers of Jewish fiction and those who hunger to unravel mysteries.” —*ForeWord s* “At its core a mystery, *The Vices* is a witty, provocative, and devilishly entertaining book. Sometimes philosophical, sometimes wildly comic, Lawrence Douglas's latest novel plays yearning against satisfaction, prestige against authenticity, and, ultimately, the desire to be someone else against the difficulty of inhabiting self.” —Sabina Murray, author of *The Caprices and Forgery* “Though *The Vices* unfolds the complexity of its whodunit with an appealing urbanity and wryness, its central virtue is the compassionate intelligence of its depiction of pain: the anguish and secret costs of self-reinvention, and in the face of history's miseries and deceits, the unexpected consolations of uncertainty.” —Jim Shepard, author of *Like You'd Understand, Anyway* “Crisply told and vigorously compelling. Douglas's bright sense of humor camouflages but does not ultimately conceal his haunting story's menacing undertow.” —Brad Leithauser, author of *The Art Student's War* “Charming and exquisite, *The Vices* is an urbane comedy imbued with the eccentric verve of a Wes Anderson film and the piquant nostalgia of *Brideshead Revisted*. It's also a gripping tale of fraud, compromise, and the inventive ways we survive the nightmare of history.” —Zachary Lazar, author of *Sway* “A sparkling, witty, smart-set comedy, the kind where human tragedy is best faced with sexy repartee, fine cuff links, and a game of Ping-Pong.” —*Commonwealth Magazine*
About the Author Lawrence Douglas teaches at Amherst College. He is the author of the novel *The Catastrophist* (Other Press, 2006), a Kirkus Best Book

of the Year, *The Memory of Judgment* (Yale University Press, 2001), a widely acclaimed study of war crimes trials; and coauthor of a book of humor, *Sense and Nonsensibility* (Simon Schuster, 2004). His writing has appeared in the *Washington Post*, *The New York Times Book*, *The Hudson*, *McSweeney's*, *The New Yorker*, and *Harper's*. A regular contributor to the *Times Literary Supplement*, Douglas lives in Sunderland, Massachusetts. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. By the time we made it to the parking lot, we'd taken tentative strides toward sobriety. Winter in the past day had snuck up on us. I squinted into the sunlight, dagger sharp and empty of heat. A wicked wind made swirls and eddies of dust and cigarette butts. Oliver thrust his hands deeper into his pockets and bunched his shoulders, but his coat remained unzipped. He looked at me; his eyes, behind the formidable newscaster's glasses, were tearing from the cold. A blast of wind made him nearly swallow his words. "Did I tell you that I was recently dumped by my therapist?" I shook my head, suppressing a shiver. "I started seeing him about two years ago, when Sophia and I got involved. He's really an excellent therapist, smart and insightful, a dead ringer for Gene Wilder. But gradually he became so fed up with my endless frantic rehashing of the same problems, so dispirited by my compulsive tendency to seek advice which I then ignore or declare myself incapable of implementing, so perplexed by my penchant for self-examination without profitable end, and so alarmed by my inability or refusal to restrain my thoughts, which overheat and go nowhere, like bats flapping around a closed attic, that he recently began a session with the simple declaration, 'I don't think I'm helping you. I don't think I'm capable of helping you.' He apologized and we shook hands; I even tried to cheer him up—he did as good a job as anybody could have..." Oliver smiled wanly and pointed a single finger toward his temple, not pistol-like, but as one might to a curious artifact in a museum: "Sick."