



# The Prestige (Valancourt 20th Century Classics)

*Christopher Priest*

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In the smoke-and-mirrors world of Victorian music halls, two talented young stage magicians vie to be known as the best illusionist in London. Each of them performs a masterful and seemingly impossible illusion, and each is determined to unravel the secret of his rival's trick at any cost. But what starts out as professional jealousy soon escalates into a bitter and deadly obsession whose terrible consequences will still be felt a century later by their descendants, who have their own surprising reasons for wanting to discover the truth.

One of Christopher Priest's most acclaimed works and winner of both the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and the World Fantasy Award, *The Prestige* is an ingeniously constructed entertainment, a masterpiece of misdirection where nothing is what it seems. Readers who have seen the 2006 film adaptation directed by Christopher Nolan will find that though the book shares many similarities with the movie, it also contains many surprises, as well as a chilling ending that the reader will never see coming.

Christopher Priest's classic novel *The Affirmation* is also available from Valancourt Books, and his *The Space Machine*, *A Dream of Wessex*, and *The Separation* are all forthcoming from Valancourt.

"A taut, twisting, prize-winning story of two magicians and their fin-de-siècle rivalry that taints successive generations of their respective families. Electrifying effects and a deft handling of mysteries and their explanations (some remaining tantalizingly incomplete) in an unexpectedly compelling fusion of weird science and legerdemain." – *Kirkus Reviews*

"Enthrallingly odd. A carefully calculated period style that is remarkably akin to that of the late Robertson Davies. Priest has brought it off with great imagination and skill." – *Publishers Weekly*

"Lushly set in the velvet-cloaked, smoke-and-mirrors world of professional magic in turn-of-the-century London, this extraordinary novel interweaves the bitter rivalry and strange secrets of two magicians. The story is enormously complex yet like a dazzling magic act itself: a series of perfectly executed illusions that build in suspense and difficulty. The result is a surprise that marvelously satisfies the myriad genres that Priest has successfully managed to merge and transform in this eerie fictional sleight of hand." – *Entertainment Weekly*

"*The Prestige* is a brilliantly constructed entertainment, with a plot as simple and intricate as a nest of Chinese boxes ... a dizzying magic show of a novel, chock-a-block with all the props of Victorian sensation fiction." – *Washington Post*

"It's an extraordinary performance, his best book in years, perhaps his best ever. Highly recommended." – *The New York Review of Science Fiction*

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