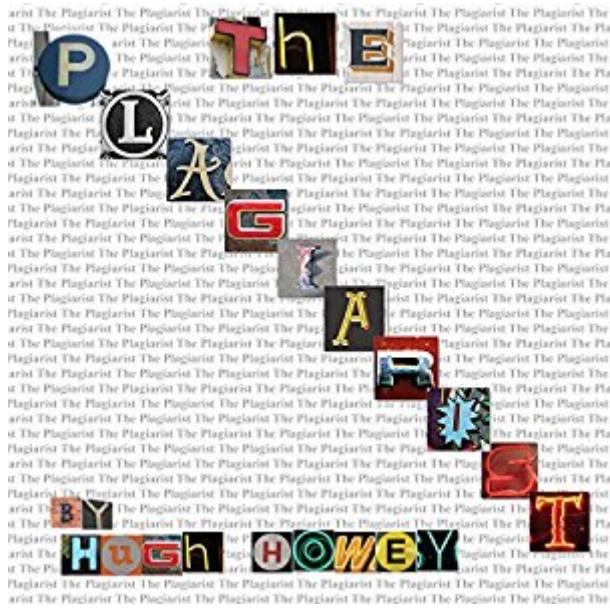


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# The Plagiarist: A Novella



## **Synopsis**

Adam Griffey is living two lives. By day, he teaches literature. At night, he steals it. Adam is a plagiarist, an expert reader with an eye for great works. He prowls simulated worlds perusing virtual texts, looking for the next big thing. And when he finds it, he memorizes it page by page, line by line, word for word. And then he brings it back to his world, the real world, and he sells it. But what happens when these virtual worlds begin to seem more real than his own? What happens when the people within them mean more to him than flesh and blood? What happens when a living thing falls in love with someone who does not actually exist?

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is the third book I've read from Hugh Howey and I've noticed he has an uncanny knack for building a story around one interesting and unique idea. In *Wool* it was people living in a post apocalyptic silo with one view of the outside world that may or may not be real. In *Half Way Home* it was a unique twist on planet colonization. The *Plagiarist* tells a story based on computer simulations that allow the user to "jack in" and explore computer created worlds. That idea in itself isn't too terribly original but how our protagonist Adam spends his time in the virtual world is. Definitely worth a buck.

The *Plagiarist* by Hugh Howey is a short story examining a possible future where simulations in cyberspace have run off on their own, turning into almost self sustaining environments. As a result,

these sim worlds have made incredible, independent advancements in the fields of arts and sciences. Taking advantage, people from the "real world" began to take literary works, art, and scientific advancements back to the real world. Hugh Howey raises an important question in *The Plagiarist*: who owns the rights to these works? In my view, these works become public domain. My reasoning is that when you have simulated worlds creating sims creating sins creating sims creating and so on, the property rights between the original owner from the real world and the sim world where the product is made is tenuous at best. So I view such products as water from a spring where any member of the public can dip in. However, this is my personal view and the courts may rule the opposite way on this issue. Hugh Howey is a forward thinker who understands the ramifications of the existence of such simulated worlds that exist purely as bits of data on servers and networks. When future technology finally merges with the world envisioned by this author, our definitions of property may well be turned upside down.

I found this short story entertaining even though I intuited the plot twist a tad early. It is one of those little nuggets that makes you stop and think. Was Adam and Belatrix real? If you apply Descartes' philosophical proposition of "Cogito ergo sum" then they were as real as you and I. Now bounce over to examine the moral implications. If I create something that gains self-awareness can I kill it with impunity by shutting down the servers it exists in? This could readily be used as required reading for a collegiate philosophy discussion. The world within a world within a world scenario was a fun exercise and Mr. Howey executed it nicely. I like how you are left wondering if there is another layer to the onion. For a short story the main character development was adequate enough for this reader to care about what happened to Adam and to become engrossed in the story. As always, the writing by Mr. Howey was above par, flowed nicely, and did not distract from the story. I would have liked to seen this story fleshed out a bit more to include more supporting character development but it works as is and produces the same effect.

After reading Hugh Howey's *Wool* series, I decided to pick this one up and glad I did. It's a fairly short read - it took me about 30-45 minutes to read it, and it left me wanting to delve into more situations into the simulated worlds he has created. Without having a spoiler, I will tell you Howey does another great job with the personal interactions and somehow putting you in the heads of the characters: when they are tired, you feel a little tired, when the main character starts feeling anxious you start reading a little faster. This is realistic futuristic / science fiction as you can easily wrap your

head around the technologies without calling b.s. on certain points like many of us do with certain styles of science fiction. Consider me a Hugh Howey fan, ready for more!

This is a very interesting story and super entertaining. This sad guy is trying to find something to live for in these digital worlds and he can't seem to fill the void.

Anyone who has read and enjoyed Hugh Howey's other works will surely like this short story as well. As usual, he has edited out any "filler", and even within the confines of a short story has brought his characters to life. Entertaining and thought-provoking, and most definitely a good read.

I loved Hugh Howey's Silo series so much that I am now on a quest to read all of his works. The Plagiarist was just as original and believable as the Silo series. Howey provides great writing with a twist for the imagination to explore and think about for weeks.

First off, if you haven't read any of Hugh's other work, stop reading this now and try out his entire catalog. There's a huge variety between the Molly Fyde Series, Wool Series and his short stories, but none of them disappoint. The Plagiarist lives up to those high bars and is a terrific example of how he can draw the reader into a completely immersive physical and emotional realm before you even know it. In fewer words than it takes some authors to describe a single room, he manages to get you right inside the protagonist's head...or is it him getting inside of your head. The thing about The Plagiarist is that even when you see it coming, you are so invested in the story that it can really affect you. This is one of those stories that I read at night and couldn't go to sleep. I couldn't read anything for several days the impact was so strong as I kept mulling the story and its implications over in my head. The thing about great writers and their great stories is that they live on with you sometimes weeks and years after you put them down. The characters aren't confined between the dedication and the author's picture. If you enjoy this type of story that can completely consume you and stick with you, read this. If you're looking for a short introduction to this insanely talented author that keeps recommending for you, read this. If you've read all of his other work, well you probably aren't reading this review anyway.

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