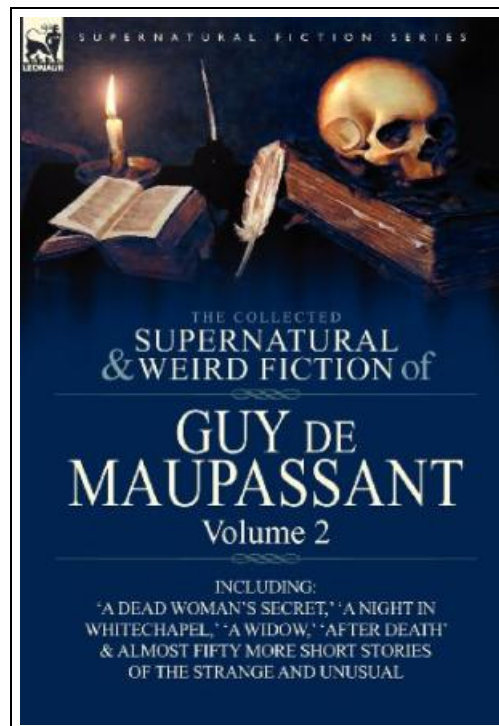


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LEONAU. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. Hardcover. 396 pages. Dimensions: 8.1in. x 5.6in. x 1.4in. A second foray into the strange imagination of Guy de Maupassant if the genre of supernatural fiction were a windowless corridor there would be those authors who stood at the light of the door only to peep playfully within and those who ventured farther along it to where the light was dimmer and the fear more palpable. Inevitably, in this analogy, there would be those who occupied a place far from the light where the darkness was almost complete. There, perhaps, one would find the work of Guy de Maupassant. It is a place uncomfortable to occupy and, for some, to visit. It is difficult to know how much of the deep disturbance of the troubled and driven characters within these often erotic stories comes from the authors interest in psychology and how much inspiration came from his own proclivities. Certainly his self-penned epitaph I have coveted everything and enjoyed nothing, is revealing. In 1892 ravaged by syphilis, wracked by obsessions and paranoia the author attempted suicide by cutting his own throat. He was committed to a private asylum and died the following year. He was 42 years old. Guy de Maupassant is recognised as a giant of nineteenth century French literature, a protégé of Flaubert, an inspiration to H. P. Lovecraft, among others, and an acknowledged master of the short story—a form in which he was very prolific. Indeed, this special Leonaur three volume collection of his excursions into the supernatural and strange contains almost 140 stories. De Maupassant produced fine prose in an economical style for which he became famous, but some more recent translations have been criticised for having lost his essential elegance of style; to preserve the integrity of the writing as far as...

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