



French Decadent Tales (Oxford World's Classics)

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"He had become the dandy of the unpredictable."

A quest for new sensations--and an avowed desire to shock--possessed the Decadent writers of fin-de-siècle Paris. Indeed, the years 1880-1900 saw an extraordinary, hothouse flowering of talent, that produced some of the most exotic, stylized, and cerebral literature in the French language. Death and Eros haunt these pages, and a polymorphous perversity by turns hilarious and horrifying. Their stories teem with addicts, maniacs, and murderers as they strive to outdo each other.

This marvelous selection by Stephen Romer--whose translations brilliantly capture the stylish wit and black humor of the originals--brings together 36 of the best decadent tales from the French fin-de-siècle, including work by well-known writers such as Maupassant, Lorrain, Mirbeau, and Villiers as well as lesser known figures such as Léon Bloy, Jean Richepin, and the Belgian Georges Rodenbach. Romer's engaging introduction provides a full context for the stories, underscoring the principal literary, philosophical, scientific, and political trends of the time, which fed into their authors' loathing of the modern world, and the discovery of the Unconscious.

The book also includes biographical notes on the authors and explanatory notes to clarify cultural references, plus a chronology of the key publications and main events of the period.

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French Decadent Tales (Oxford World's Classics) From Brand: Oxford University Press Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #376593 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Oxford University Press
- Published on: 2013-05-19
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 5.00" h x .70" w x 7.70" l, .44 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 272 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

[A] beautifully translated anthology Graham Robb, TLS

About the Author

Stephen Romer is a specialist of French and British Modernism. He has published four collections of poetry, the most recent of which, *Yellow Studio* (Carcanet/Oxford Poets, 2008) was shortlisted for the T. S. Eliot prize. He has edited and co-translated *Twentieth-Century French Poems* (Faber, 2002), and has served as judge for the Tower poetry prize, the Popescu Prize for European Translation, and the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. He reviews regularly for the *Guardian* and the *TLS*.

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