



In Light of Shadows: More Gothic Tales by Izumi Kyoka

Kyoka Izumi

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In Light of Shadows is the long-awaited second volume of short fiction by the Meiji-Taisho writer Izumi Kyoka. It includes the famous novella Uta andon (A story by lantern light), the bizarre, antipsychological story ""Mayu kakushi no rei"" (A quiet obsession), and Kyoka's hauntingly erotic final work, ""Rukoshinso"" (The heartvine), as well as critical discussions of each of these three tales. Translator Charles Inouye places Kyoka's ""literature of shadows"" (kage no bungaku) within a worldwide gothic tradition even as he refines its Japanese context. Underscoring Kyoka's relevance for a contemporary international audience, Inouye adjusts Tanizaki Jun'ichiro's evaluation of Kyoka as the most Japanese of authors by demonstrating how the writer's paradigm of the suffering heroine can be linked to his exposure to Christianity, to a beautiful American woman, and to the aesthetic of blood sacrifice. In Light of Shadows masterfully conveys the magical allusiveness and elliptical style of this extraordinary writer, who Mishima Yukio called ""the only genius of modern Japanese letters.



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