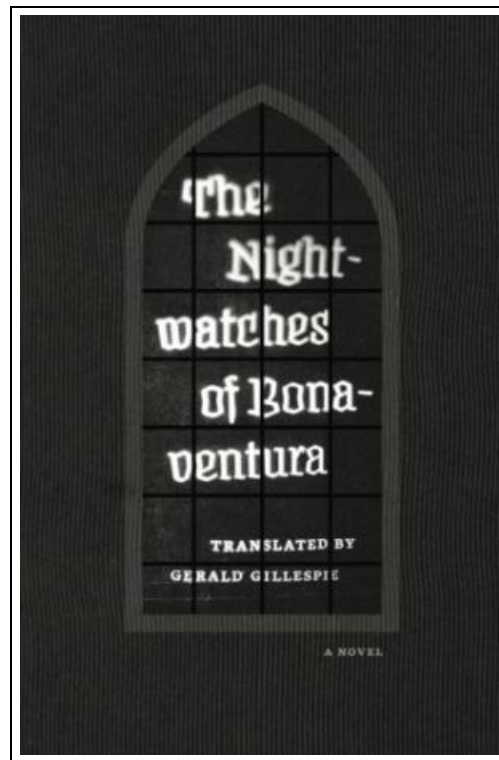


The Nightwatches of Bonaventura



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Reviews

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THE NIGHTWATCHES OF BONAVENTURA



The University of Chicago Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, The Nightwatches of Bonaventura, Bonaventura, Gerald Gillespie, First published in German in 1804, under the nom de plume "Bonaventura," The Nightwatches of Bonaventura is a dark, twisted, and comic novel, one part Poe and one part Beckett. The narrator and anti-hero is not Bonaventura, but a night watchman named Kreuzgang, a failed poet, actor, and puppeteer who claims to be the spawn of the devil himself. As a night watchman, Kreuzgang takes voyeuristic pleasure in spying on the follies of his fellow citizens, and every night he makes his rounds and stops to peer into a window or door, where he observes framed scenes of murder, despair, theft, romance, and other private activities. In his responses, Kreuzgang is cynical, pessimistic, yet not without humor. For him, life is a grotesque, macabre, and base joke played by a mechanical and heartless force. Since its publication, fans have speculated on the novel's authorship, and it is now believed to be by theater director August Klingemann, who first staged Goethe's Faust. Organized into sixteen separate night watches, the sordid scenes glimpsed through parted curtains, framed by door chinks, and lit by candles and shadows anticipate the cinematic. A cross between the gothic and romantic, The Nightwatches of Bonaventura is brilliant in its perverse intensity, presenting an inventory of human despair and disgust through the eyes of a bitter, sardonic watcher who draws laughter from tragedy. Translated with a fresh introduction by Gerald Gillespie, The Nightwatches of Bonaventura will be welcomed by a new generation of English-language fans, eager to sample the night's dark offerings.



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