



## Drifting:

By J. -K. Huysmans

Dedalus Limited. Paperback. Condition: New. 109 pages. Dimensions: 7.8in. x 5.2in. x 0.5in. The misfortunes of Jean Folantin, a downtrodden clerk working for the Ministry of the Interior in Paris, form the subject of J. -K. Huysmans blackly comic novella, Drifting ( vau-leau). At first glance, Folantins problems seem to be a world away from those of Jean Floressas des Esseintes, the aristocratic anti-hero of Huysmans Decadent classic Against Nature, written just two years later in 1884. But the two men share more than just a first name: like des Esseintes, Folantin is in the throes of an existential crisis: alienated from a Paris undergoing rapid modernisation, the pace of social change leaves him feeling out of place, impotent, a small cog in an impersonal commercial world. Through the distorting lens of Huysmans dark sense of humour, the dyspeptic Folantin is transformed into a modern-day Ulysses, and his tortuous quest through the streets of Haussmanns Paris to find a capable housekeeper and a decent meal reaches its conclusion in one of the most daring anti-climaxes literally speaking in the whole of nineteenth century fiction. This new translation by Brendan King includes, for the first time in English, a contemporary profile of...

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