While the Women are Sleeping

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(Jamar Stracke)

WHILE THE WOMEN ARE SLEEPING

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Vintage Publishing. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, While the Women are Sleeping, Javier Marias, Celebrated as one of the greatest writers of his generation, Javier Marias is best known for his spy trilogy, "Your Face Tomorrow", which has been compared to Proust and hailed as one of the great modern European novels. In his first short story collection for fifteen years, beautifully translated by Margaret Jull Costa, he brings together tales which span his entire writing career from the 1960s to the present. Marias' characters are slippery, and they live on the edges of society: a tramp, a butler, a bodyguard, a ghost. They threaten the everyday, rational world, and, compelled by desperation, are driven to perverse acts of obsession. In the title story an obscenely fat man fixated with his much younger lover endlessly videotapes her every move, and, in a chance midnight rendezvous, confides his shocking plans for her to a stranger; in "The Resignation Letter of Senor of Santiesteban" a ghost is condemned to repeatedly resign from his job; and in perhaps the most perfectly conceived story, when a man of impeccable taste and refinement meets his doppelganger at a work dinner ('it was like dining opposite mirror made flesh'), he starts changing his dress and behaviour, in ways he previously would have abhorred, to mark the difference, only to find, at the next work convention, that his ghoulish twin has done exactly the same. Mesmerising, unexpected and disturbing, these creepy, haunting stories inspire the reader to look at the normal things of life aslant.

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