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Lucchesi and the Whale

By Frank Lentricchia

Duke University Press. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, *Lucchesi and the Whale*, Frank Lentricchia, *Lucchesi and The Whale* is an unusual work of fiction by noted author and critic Frank Lentricchia. Its central character, Thomas Lucchesi Jr., is a college professor in the American heartland whose obsessions and compulsions include traveling to visit friends in their last moments of life - because grief alone inspires him to write - and searching for secret meaning in Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*. Himself a writer of "stories full of violence in a poetic style," Lucchesi tells his students that he teaches "only because [his] fiction is commercially untouchable" and to "never forget that." Austerely isolated, anxiety-ridden, and relentlessly self-involved, Lucchesi nonetheless cannot completely squelch his eagerness for love. Having become "a mad Ahab of reading," who is driven to dissect the "artificial body of Melville's behemothian book" to grasp its truth, Lucchesi allows his thoughts to wander and loop from theory to dream to reality to questionable memory. But his black humor-tinged musings are often as profoundly moving as they are intellectual, such as the section in which he ponders the life and philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein in relation to the significance of...



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