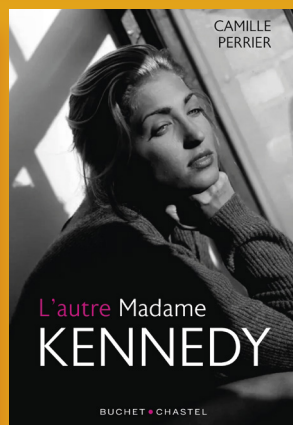
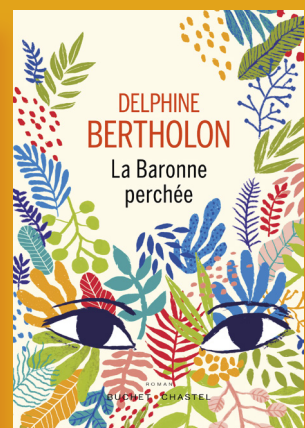
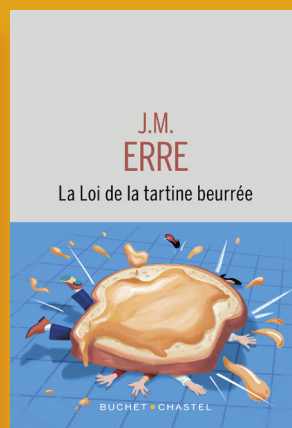
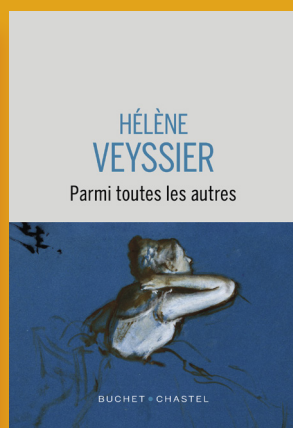


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# FRENCH FICTION

# DE NOS BLESSURES UN ROYAUME (From our Wounds A Kingdom)

Gaëlle Josse



**A**gnès is a dancer. She was in love with Guillaume. Devastated by heartbreak a year after his death, she decides to turn her back on her life and leave it behind. A long expedition by bus for an itinerary with no visible logic that will take her from Nice to Zagreb through Italy. 7 days. 1,000 kilometers.

In her bag she has Guillaume's favorite book. The book, he said, that opened his eyes and confirmed his vocation. The book that she read aloud to him one more time over his last days. And the one that she wants to drop off at the Museum of Broken Relationships, in Zagreb, to free herself.

Being able to go on living sometimes demands strange detours.

In her latest novel, Gaëlle Josse offers readers a luminous and deeply moving text about a search for one's self that is also a love letter to books, literature and all the paper lives that help us keep moving forward.

**About the author:** Gaëlle Josse's debut, *The Silent Hours*, was published in 2011. It was followed by *Nos vies désaccordées (Discordant Lives)* in 2012 and *Noce de neige (Snow Anniversary)* in 2013. All three books won several literary prizes.

Published by Notabilia, *Le Dernier Gardien d'Ellis Island (The Last Guardian of Ellis Island)* won the European Union Literature Prize and was translated into 14 territories.

*Une longue impatience* won the Public Prize at the Geneva Salon, the Simenon Prize and the Exbrayat Prize; *Une femme en contre-jour (A Woman Against the Light)*, the 2020 Terres de Paroles Award and the Place Ronde du Livre Photographique Prize. *Ce Matin-là (That Morning)*, published in 2021, also found a sizable readership. Her novels are both commercial and critical successes.

**Polish rights sold to Wydawnictwo Literackie (in a preempt)**  
**Swedish and Italian rights under option**

**LOGLISTED FOR RTL-LIRE PRIZE**

**Publication date:** January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Number of pages:** 176

**Retail price:** 19,50 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# LA VIE OSÉCAILLE. UNE ANNÉE À TAIPEI (Oracle Bone Life. One year in Taipei)

Lena Vathy



**A** bored young woman leaves Paris, her family and her career for a fresh start in development work. With Spanish roots, she assumes she'll get a mission in South America, but with the luck of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' draw, she is sent to... Taiwan.

Eager for exoticism, overflowing with fantasies about the great Other, her initial encounters with her new world are thrilling: Mandarin characters are a friendly presence, familiar faces on her journey. Yet as she gets to know both the island and the arcana of diplomacy, she starts to feel the effects of a hitherto unsuspected loss: language.

Who is she now, if she doesn't read anymore, doesn't speak anymore, and doesn't understand the words she lives among anymore? Used to moving comfortably between languages and finding both freedom and shelter among them, she has to reinvent herself completely.

Taiwan is an island surrounded by both the sea and China. In this confined territory whose fate is suspended, Xia – whose name isn't really Xia – goes on a quest, even if it might mean she'll disintegrate or forget herself, the better to recompose herself afterwards, like fragments of a new language.

**About the author:** Born in 1981, Léna Vathy studied languages, literature and political science. A high-ranking civil servant who has worked in France and abroad, she has pursued literary activities, as both a translator and an author of fiction, alongside her career in public service. This is her debut.

**Publication date:** January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

**Number of pages:** 192

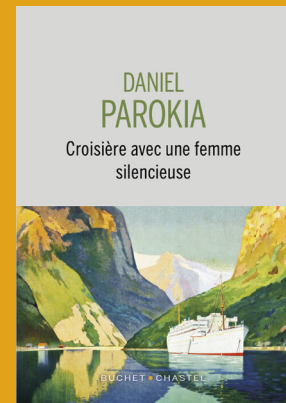
**Retail price:** 250 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Notabilia (Noir sur Blanc)

# CROISIÈRE AVEC UNE FEMME SILENCIEUSE (Cruise with an Unspeaking Woman)

Daniel Parokia



Just after the first COVID-19 lockdown, Paul Chiesa – a forty-something academic – decides to go on vacation for a breath of fresh air. To escape France’s summer heatwaves, he chooses a cruise around Northern Europe.

In the somewhat artificial atmosphere on board, he meets Alix de Torgues, an angelic, taciturn young woman who is traveling with her family. Misled by them, he assumes that she has lost her voice because of a cold and will get it back soon. After a few days, though, he realizes that her ailment is more serious than that, and that the true cause is both deep and dramatic. Profoundly shaken, Paul wonders what he’s getting into, but it’s too late, he’s already smitten.

Off the coast of Stockholm, there is an outbreak of coronavirus on board. It will be fatal to Alix. Paul, who manages to recover, goes back to France. Months later, at a conference organized at his university, he’s convinced he recognizes the young woman’s familiar silhouette ...

Since his first novel, *Avant de rejoindre le grand soleil*, Daniel Parokia has been writing about thwarted romantic encounters. His characters, who are often being manipulated, have to overcome obstacles and figure out what’s really going... which someone has been hiding from them. The whole is always well-served by a charming writing style.

**About the author:** Professor emeritus since 2012, Daniel Parokia has studied philosophy, linguistics and mathematics. This is his third novel published by Buchet/Chastel.

**Publication date:** January 16<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 304

**Retail price:** 22 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# VIES ET SURVIES D'ELISABETH HALPERN (Life & Lives of Elizabeth Halpern) Carine Hazan



When she goes to visit her grandmother living in exile in Melbourne, the narrator of this book has no idea of the disruption the journey will bring to her life. Yet the very name of Elisabeth Halpern, née Lea Liebermann, is an invitation to live life intensely. Born a Jew in Ukraine, with what she calls “the face of the enemy,” she grew up as a motherless child, narrowly escaped deportation, took a long sea journey to a distant country with her oldest daughter in her arms and was married three times. Now in her 80s, Eli has a plan: drag her screenwriter of a granddaughter to the Australian Alps and, once there, order her to write the script for the perfect crime.

The target: a German man in his 80’s who must have participated in the Final Solution and who is none other than... her lover.

From the ghetto of Lvov to a forest on Mount Buffalo, from a farcical MacGuffin to painful memories of one of the darkest pages in European history, Carine Hazan manages to intertwine a thriller with comedy, a fable with history, philosophy with suspense, the trauma of several generations of women with that of the war. Better yet, she succeeds at moving us deeply by exploring the question of revenge. And of women’s courage.

**About the author:** A graduate of HEC, Carine Hazan worked in advertising before becoming the literary director of several different audiovisual-production companies. She is a screenwriter, a filmmaker and dialogue writer. Her first novel, *jean-jacques*, was published in 2021. She lives in Marseille.

**Publication date:** January 16<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 240

**Retail price:** 21 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Phébus)

# LA MER EST UN MUR (The Sea is a Wall)

Marin Postel



**Q**uiésay. An island in the English Channel about a dozen miles off the coast of the continent. Whether you're a local or a summer person, the rhythm of the waves is the same. That's about the only thing they have in common though. Because there are those who live in the barracks, children of the sea. And there are the summer people in the white houses, those who live on the plain or the jug handle, who rub their pea jackets on stones for that authentic local look. Two irreconcilable worlds.

Yet, Antoine, a doctor's son raised in Paris and Quiésay, has decided to change sides. And he will pay the price. His younger brother tells us the tale.

Through the eyes of a younger brother, thirty years in the life of a family, and particularly of its eldest son. A fierce young man's unbridled desire for adventure and determination to strike off on his own, leaving the comfort of his family's life behind. His very being is torn between two worlds: the island where he has spent all his summers, and the continent where he was born and raised.

**About the author:** Marin Postel was born in Paris. After getting a law degree, he went to look for work in Vietnam, where he spent four years. Back in France, he did all sorts of day jobs, while devoting as much time as possible to writing. From that period came poems set to music. At age 36, *The Sea is a Wall* is his first novel.

**LOONGLISTED FOR THE PRIX OUEST-FRANCE / ÉTONNANTS VOYAGEURS**

**Publication date:** January 16<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 192

**Retail price:** 19 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Phébus)

# LA LOI DE LA TARTINE BEURRÉE (The Buttered Toast Phenomenon)

JM Erre



Anna and Jean-Luc Godart, respectively a psychoanalyst and a psychologist, have just moved into a new apartment. After a wild housewarming party, they face a rude awakening: the phone keeps ringing for all sorts of absurd reasons, a plumber shows up and insists that he was called in to deal with an emergency, delivery people bring items that the couple supposedly ordered and more. Are Anna and Jean-Luc being targeted by someone with evil intentions, or are they unconsciously bringing the disturbances upon themselves? As they start to seriously wonder which it is, their certainties crumble, and cracks start to appear in the life they've built: it all adds up to the perfect setting for some wacky couple's therapy. With a piece of buttered toast stuck to the ceiling over our heroes' heads the whole time... The toast of Damocles?

The title, *The Buttered Toast Phenomenon* is an established observation similar to Murphy's Law, which says that anything that can go wrong, will... or in this case, that a piece of buttered toast will always fall with the buttered side down.

In formal terms, *The Buttered Toast Phenomenon* is a short novel that could almost be a play, with its single setting, short lapse of time, game of masks and three characters who face off in verbal jousting. With a glancing similarity to the author's *Le bonheur est au fond du couloir à gauche* (*Happiness is Down the Hall on the Left*), in that the frantic search for happiness and desperate attempts to extricate yourself from all sorts of problems turn out to be the two sides of the same existential quest.

**About the author:** J.M. Erre is a high school teacher. From the start, all of his novels have been published by Buchet Chastel. Several of them have been translated into different languages. He also works as a scriptwriter.

**Publication date:** February 6<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 208

**Retail price:** 19,50 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# LA BARONNE PERCHÉE (The Baroness in the Tree)

Delphine Bertholon



**A** lighter for fire, a supply of food, clothing and water. As her classmates are leaving on vacation, Billie, 13, has decided to run away.

Inspired by Italo Calvino's *The Baron in the Trees*, she moves into a treehouse in an abandoned treetop-adventure course overlooking the ocean.

Hidden by the lush greenery, she settles down to wait, without realizing that her impulsive, adolescent action has stirred up secrets from the past.

What is she running away from? She doesn't really know. Her father's indifference, probably, shrouded as he is in sorrow since his wife left after the girl's birth. The gap between them has grown so huge that when Leo realizes that his daughter has fled, he doesn't have a clue where to start looking for her. While Billie waits in her leafy refuge, a stranger who is looking for her other reasons reaches out to her.

With the insight and vitality that are features of her writing, Delphine Bertholon's *La baronne perchée* provides both an ode to youthful energy and a touching novel about roots that can hold us up or tie us down.

**About the author:** Delphine Bertholon is a scriptwriter and a novelist. She is, most notably, the author of *Twist*, the critically acclaimed *Grâce*. Both were translated in many European territories.

**Publication date:** February 6<sup>th</sup> 2025

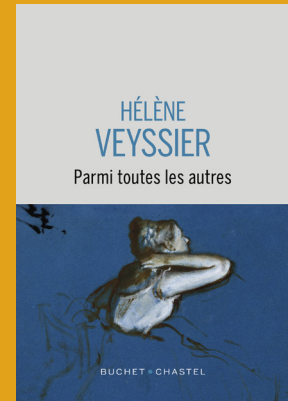
**Number of pages:** 240

**Retail price:** 20,50 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# PARMI TOUTES LES AUTRES VOUS M'AVIEZ REMARQUÉE (Out of all the Girls, you noticed me) Hélène Veyssier



**1873:** Adèle, 15, has left her home in the country to earn a meager living as a dancer in the corps de ballet at the Paris Opera House. Among the many men who come to gaze at the young ballerinas, one stands out. He's not like the others. She knows that he is Edgar Degas, the "man who paints dancers."

One sunny day in May, he speaks to her. Dazzled, she brings him to her room. When he leaves – perhaps to make it up to her – he gives her a drawing, a sketch of "Portrait de famille."

After that one day, when Degas comes to the Opera house, he pays no attention whatsoever to her. From then on, Adèle is deeply sad.

Years later, when she's married, has children and has achieved a comfortable lifestyle, she is still haunted by the memory of that afternoon out of time spent with the painter who has since become famous. One day she goes to a major art show at a museum and she sees the painting based on the sketch Degas gave her...

This thoughtful novel tells the story of an unspoken love. And takes us behind the scenes of a world-famous painting.

At the time of the Impressionists, Adèle spends a few hours with Degas and falls madly in love – an indestructible memory that buoys her up and helps her to keep going.

**About the author:** Hélène Veyssier lives in Paris and has two novels published by Editions Arléa.

**Publication date:** March 6<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 176

**Retail price:** 17 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# LES VAGABONDES (The Vagabonds)

Florian Ferrier



**T**wo women meet in the waning days of World War II, as Germany is throwing itself furiously into a last-ditch fight for survival. The first, Hanna, in her 40s, is a writer who fled to Switzerland in 1934, when her books were banned. At the request of the American armed forces, she agrees to go back to Germany to give a speech about peace in a liberated zone of her homeland, which she can barely recognize. The second, Ilse, in her 20s, is a leader in the girl's branch of the Hitler Youth. She has been assigned to a commando of young soldiers that have been ordered to capture Hanna, so she can be tried and hanged for high treason. Her fate will act as a warning to anyone else who might be tempted to turn their back on the Führer.

The novel is a wandering journey through a country in ruins, where the entire population has been thrown into what Goebbels called "Total War."

It is also a confrontation between two ways of seeing the world. Yet forced proximity and shared hardship will bring Hanna and Ilse close. Over the course of their wandering, each of them will gradually see her certainties waver.

*The Vagabonds* is loosely based on true events. Although Hanna's character is fictional, Ilse was directly inspired by a young woman who actually participated in a similar operation in April, 1945.

**About the author:** Florian Ferrier spent most of his youth in Alsace, before moving to Polynesia with his family at age 16. Passionate about writing, he decided to make a career of it, and returned to France. A director of animated series and a comic-book writer, he has also written several novels on the women on wartime, namely *Etoile rouge*, focused upon Roza Chanina's character and published in 2023 by Buchet/Chastel.

**Publication date:** March 6<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 288

**Retail price:** 21,90 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# L'ÉTÉ À L'OEUVRE (Summer at Work)

Marie Rozenn Brard



**T**he late 1990s. Elsa is exploring new connections to the world now that she has a modem at home. She writes and replies to messages from people she has never met. One day, someone invites her to Brittany, and she decides to go on a whim. When she gets there, she discovers an unexpected crossing, and the unexpected is exactly what she was hoping for. Following a young man who is both gentle and impenetrable, she lends a hand on a program that takes troubled teens to sea. Over the course of that collective odyssey, she will make a second decisive encounter, and in a clever play of eclipses, the first one will wind up revealing the second.

Yann and Napo live on the margins of a society where they feel like they don't fit in. This new world, carried aloft by a tremendous desire for freedom, will shake Elsa's foundations. By the time the summer has ended, Elsa has grown into a young woman. That summer will be her whole life.

Like a cross between a *bildungsroman* and a social novel, this debut novel intertwines the trajectories of a solitary young woman and a group of magnificent misfits.

Insightful and moving, it sheds subtle light on the subject of the difficult passage from adolescence to adulthood.

**About the author:** Marie Rozenn Brard was born in Brittany, where she spent her childhood. As a teen, she moved to the area around Lyon, while preserving strong ties to Brittany. In that way, even from a distance, she followed the adventure of Wagon, a squat and an alternative venue that was an iconic piece of the punk scene in the early 2000s. After studying philosophy, she worked in bookstores for over ten years. She now works at the library of the National School of Architecture in Lyon. *L'Été à l'œuvre* is her first novel.

**Publication date:** March 6<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 224

**Retail price:** 19,90 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Phébus)

# LA ROUTE DES CRÊTES (The Ridge Road)

Agnès de Clairville



The novel opens with a photo. A close-up of a man, his driving gloves, and his eyes seeking to escape. Breathtaking looks and the attitude of someone who holds himself apart from ordinary mortals. Is it evasiveness? The narrator speaks directly to the man in the photo... but will get no reply.

Twenty-five years earlier, on December 31, 2001, her doorbell rings. A municipal employee and a police officer have come to inform her that her husband, who had gone for a drive in the winter sun that afternoon, has had an accident. Marc-Aurèle has just joined the club of young men who live fast and die young.

And she has joined the club of widows. Once the shock has passed, an inner battle between her devastating sorrow and the joy of expecting her first child begins. But that's not all: there is also the battle between remembering and forgetting, between devotion to endless love and an obsessional quest for the truth. Over the course of a tale that switches between the present and a meticulous reconstitution of the past, the veneer begins to crack. Concealed within a tragic accident is the story of a young man with a vague gaze in a photo, of the woman who loved him, of two dissonant families, of violence and of impossible love.

Taking a tragedy – a woman about to give birth to her first child unexpectedly loses the man she loves – as her starting point, Agnès de Clairville explores the grey areas in couples and families, filiation and inheritance.

**About the author:** Agnès de Clairville was born in Normandy and now lives in Marseille. With a science background, she worked as a photographer before deciding to devote herself to writing. *Corps de ferme* (*Farm Building*), her second novel, was shortlisted for the *ELLE Magazine Readers' Prize* and will be published in English in October 2025. *La Route des Crêtes* is her third novel.

**Publication date:** March 6<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 192

**Retail price:** 20,50 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Phébus) / UK rights under option

# BIG MACHIAVEL

## (Big Machiavel)

Henri Vernet



What if the big consulting firms got fed up with politicians' stupidity and decided to take over?

A man disappears in the catacombs: Accident? Suicide? Murder?

In Rome, a brilliant consultant to the head of the Italian government is getting spied and receiving death threats. The Mafia is suspected.

In France, Quentin Marchal, a rising star in a major consulting firm, is assigned to help a surprise candidate in the presidential election with her campaign.

All three characters work for O'Kerney, a worldwide consulting giant, nicknamed the Firm. The consultancy, which hires only the best of the best, has decided to put the most powerful algorithms, ones that can handle any and all political and economic situations, at their candidate's service.

But the Firm's ambitions are vertiginous and know no bounds...

For this suspenseful novel bursting with unexpected plot twists, Henri Vernet also drew on an in-depth analysis of the techniques used by the huge firms that actually control the world's economy.

**About the author:** Henri Vernet is the deputy editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Le Parisien*, specialized in politics, international news and defense. He is the author of several non-fiction books about politics, as well as a first reality-novel, *Article 36*, and *Radicalisation au cœur des services publics* (*Radicalisation at the Heart of Public Service*), both published by Lattès.

**Publication date:** March 13<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 304

**Retail price:** 22,90 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# L'ÎLE DE CLIPPERTON

## (Clipperton Island)

Raphaël Laforgue



Magda wants to read *Clipperton Island*. She's old enough! On the actual Clipperton Island, the anonymously authored book is everywhere. Children are introduced to it at the end of elementary school, after some preparatory reading that is approved by the Ministry. The island's best writers wish they had written it! Yet lately, trouble has been brewing around Clipperton Island. While some people want to have the book banned, others are ready to lay down their lives for it. A complicated year is looming.

A few generations ago, three intrepid women, along with a gang of social outcasts whom they took under their wing, swam to Clipperton Island to escape the terrible dictatorships of the Fertilizers and the Thirty-Somethings. The island was a refuge, a blank slate where everything had to be written, built and invented. The island of possibilities. But now Clipperton is going through dark days once again. With insurrection looming, literary arguments degenerate into civil war and young Magda has to run away.

But it would take more than that to distract her from her search for the truth, especially since she thinks her grandmother may be one of the eminent personages in the book that people are trying so hard to hide from her. We follow Magda's flight, borne along by an inventive writing style that is funny and moving, tender and playful all at once. Alongside her, we tear through all the books we can get our hands on. From famous novelists' prose to little-known poets' work, together, the women's writing gradually reveals an unexpected family and political history. Drawn in for the ride, we plumb the island's mystery, discovering competing narratives for an ambiguous past and the terrible secrets concealed by the elders' silence.

**About the author:** Raphaël Laforgue was born in 1990. After studying history at Paris's prestigious École Normale Supérieure, he began to work in various film structures. *L'île de Clipperton* is his first novel.

**Publication date:** March 20<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 320

**Retail price:** 21,90 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Notabilia (Noir sur Blanc)

# AZIZA (Aziza)

Valérie Clo



The narrator returns to Tamaris, the neighborhood in Seyne-sur-Mer where she grew up. She remembers how her mother fell in love with the place at first sight – probably because it reminded her of her own childhood in Constantine. She dwells on memories of her grandmother and the powerful bond they had, too.

Living on the Mediterranean coast once again, events, scenes and memories float back into her mind; certain symptoms and fears finally start to make sense.

That's when scattered pieces of the puzzle start falling into place: what a doctor told her one day (“your symptoms must be tied to your family’s having been uprooted”); the persistent memory of a scene at the market with her grandmother; Aziza was her real name, although she had people call her Louise. Arab words, spicy food, Middle Eastern music and more.

No one in her family ever talked about the Algerian War or about their lives over there, as though the land where they all came from was a blind spot. Maybe because it was too painful, too.

By examining Aziza’s life, the narrator finally breaks free of the silence and denial to explore her family’s history. In this book, Valérie Clo recounts with tremendous love and feeling the incredibly exciting and quixotic existence she found out about.

The story of a family from Constantine (the author’s). Or how things get passed on both consciously and unconsciously through silence, the unspoken and generations... A moving page from history.

**About the author:** Valérie Clo has been an art-therapist for many years. She lives in Toulon. She has already published 6 novels with Editions Buchet/Chastel.

**Publication date:** April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 192

**Retail price:** 18,90 €

**Available material:** PDF / uncorrected bound proofs

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# BRÛLENT LES FALAISES (May the Cliffs burn)

Emmanuelle Faguer



In a mansion in a small, wind-battered town in Brittany, a family is getting ready to celebrate the 60th birthday of their patriarch, Maxence Kerivel, the scion of a long line of shipowners. His children and cousins are all there, spouses and children in tow. Even Elena, his second child, has come all the way from Spain, where she fled to years ago. There's also a surprise guest: Irène Prigent, a distant family friend, who was hired to cater the event. Barely concealed tensions are running high that evening. All the guests are carefully avoiding pronouncing the name of the daughter whose absence is on everyone's mind: Lara, the baby of the family, a free-spirited teen who disappeared one night 15 years ago.

The next morning, when he goes out jogging, Maxence finds a body at the foot of the cliffs: Irène's. While everything points to suicide, police Captain Rebecca Lombard investigates the death with unwavering determination. This latest incident in a long list of tragedies the Kerivels have suffered is bringing buried memories of the unlucky summer of 2003 back into their minds.

Both a family saga and a detective novel, *Brûlent les falaises* intertwines a legend about free-spirited women who were burned alive, and a clan that has been cursed for generations. But curses don't really exist. One more death in the family will reveal the secret that belief in superstition had kept under wraps.

**About the author:** Emmanuelle Faguer is a screenwriter for TV. Her first novel, *Les Désobéissantes* (*Disobedient Women*) was published in 2023. She lives and works in Paris.

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**Number of pages:** 352

**Retail price:** 22,90 €

**Available material:** PDF / uncorrected bound proofs

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Phébus)

# LA PENTATONIQUE DU CŒUR (Pentatonics of the Heart)

Marcus Malte



“This is a fake autobiography, or rather a fictitious one, that relates the highs and lows of a small-town boy who dies on November 1980 at age 13 and a half. He resuscitates the same day, in a different identity, after having watched a screening of the film *The Blues Brothers* at his local movie theatre.”

He truly had a revelation that day. His vocation was born, his life path unspooled before him: he was made for music. *He was made for the blues.*

At least he was convinced he was.

The tale is partially based on my personal experience (as someone from a small town, as a musician in a local rock group). It’s often funny, I hope, touching sometimes, I also hope, and occasionally out-and-out absurd and grotesque. Readers will come across John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd, James Brown, Cab Calloway and Ray Charles, as well as shrewish women from the south of France, fishermen, donut peddlers, shipyard workers and a double-decker London bus. The story’s soundtrack is the music from the film.”

**About the author:** Marcus Malte was born in 1967. His first novel was published in 1996. Since then, he hasn’t stopped writing stories, both for adults and for children. His work has received numerous literary awards, including the 2007 ELLE Readers’ Grand Prize – detective novel category, for *Garden of Love* and the 2016 Femina Prize for *Le Garçon* (*The Boy*).

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**Number of pages:** 208

**Retail price:** 19 €

**Available material:** PDF / uncorrected bound proofs

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# ON N'ABANDONNE PAS UN CHIEN SUR L'AUTOROUTE (You don't abandon a Dog on the Highway)

Benoît Toccacieli



Jérôme – 40-something, recently divorced – is driving from France to Spain in a stolen car, with no other luggage than two trunks with mysterious contents. He plans to start over on the other side of the border, leaving behind a job that oppressed him, a wife who was cheating on him and a daughter who ignores him.

The road is empty, he's starting to doze off... After a refreshing pause in a rest area, Jérôme finds that a smelly old dog has climbed into his car. That's when our character will make the first of a strong of awful decisions – starting with a phone call with disastrous consequences.

One thing leads to another and Jérôme winds picking up Juliette, a rebellious teen; Papicole, a cantankerous old man; Laura, a femme fatale, and Jacques, a failed opportunist. All sorts of pitfalls lie in wait along this unlikely crew's route. As the hours roll by, Jérôme will have to face his fears and regrets, while hoping that his unbridled imagination doesn't lead him to any worst-case scenarios.

By dawn, what will have become of the dog?

Readers embark on a road trip with Jérôme, who is bidding farewell to his old life. A long night and an entertaining story that will tug at your heart strings.

**About the author:** Benoît Toccacieli was born in Auvergne in 1987. He gave up a career as an executive in industry to find the time to live, to write and to see his children grow up.

**Publication date:** May 8<sup>th</sup> 2025

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**Available material:** PDF / uncorrected bound proofs

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

**NON FICTION**

# L'ÈRE DE LA FLEMME (The Age of Laziness)

Olivier Babeau



**O**ur personal relationship with effort has vanished. Since the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, France, like the other western established democracies, seems to have entered a new age in its history: that of laziness.

It is a significant civilizational breaking point that has led to crises for both leisure activities and work. Making an effort is no longer on the list of values that *matter*.

What are the signs of the drop in effort? Why has making an effort become too difficult? And have we really understood what this renunciation means?

Humankind has lived with and thanks to effort for as long as it has existed. It was the moral that was taught, the example that was held up as a role model. But human beings waged a 1,000-year war to find ways to save our strength and free ourselves from constraints. Thanks to our technologies, our lives have become more and more comfortable. And our social structures have evolved towards individual emancipation.

All the reasons we used to have for making an effort have faded away. We can belong to society with ease. And a sense of personal accomplishment can be achieved through enjoyable hedonism. Yet isn't effort the hidden resource of civilizations, the principle that keeps lives going and societies standing? Losing it means collapsing.

Laziness is killing us. Especially with the incredible acceleration of artificial intelligence's technological progress. Now more than ever, AI will demand a stunning surge of energy. We have to relearn to make an effort in a world that no longer demands it. This book is a diatribe against our relationship to making an effort. It analyzes both its hidden reasons and formidable consequences.

**About the author:** Olivier Babeau founded the Sapiens Institute, a think tank devoted to considerations on human beings' place in the technological world. He has written *Le Nouveau désordre numérique* (*The New Digital Disorder*, 2020 / Turgot Prize for an economics book). In 2023, he published *The Tyranny of Entertainment* which was a commercial success as well.

## FRENCH BESTSELLER NONFICTION LIST : #18

**Publication date:** January 16<sup>th</sup> 2025

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**Retail price:** 22 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/chastel)

# MERCI LA PEUR ! (Thank God for Fear)

Eric Blondeau



From the time we're little kids, people always tell us, "Don't be afraid." But that's a big mistake, because fear always comes with good intentions. Being afraid of dying, for instance, means that we want to live... So we absolutely need to acknowledge our fears, then get to know them in order to understand where they get their leverage.

Eric Blondeau clears the underbrush from the territory of our fears. There are the ones that wear a mask (fear has a thousand faces: doubt, anxiety and more); the ones that we should cultivate (when I'm driving, my fear keeps me alert and spurs me to have good reflexes); the ones that are precious (they protect me on a daily basis: if I stopped being afraid of appearing rude or disrespectful, how long would it take for me to be excluded?); the ones we need to move out of the way (if I had an argument with my father and now it feels awkward to call him, I need to move my social fear out of the way); and the ones that have shaped us (fear of being abandoned, impostor syndrome and more). Along the way, he points out some psychological truths that help us see more clearly, such as: the more selfish we are, the more afraid we are. And: fear is always based on projection.

With what he has learned from his experience in stress management, Eric Blondeau teaches us to explore the wealth of information fear offers us, rather than trying to overcome it. In a clear and straightforward style, studded with boxes and practical examples, he finally dedramatizes this long-decried emotion.

**About the author:** A specialist in behavioral and decisional mechanisms, Eric Blondeau does strategic-shift and crisis-management consulting for large corporations, coaches elite athletes, prepares diplomats for high-risk postings, and advises negotiating teams for several different countries' elite tactical units, like France's GIGN.

**Publication date:** March 13<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 224

**Retail price:** 21,50 €

**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# TOUT ET SON CONTRAIRE : UNE FOLLE HISTOIRE DE LA PENSÉE ÉCONOMIQUE CONTEMPORAINE (Everything and Anything : a Crazy History of the Contemporary Economic Thought)

Pierre-Henri de Menthon & Bruna Basini



Economists have been making mistakes for a long time, and more and more often. They are unequalled at getting the economic phenomena that affect our daily lives to say anything and everything. Inflation, deficits, global warming, revenue inequality, globalization and more. This book reveals the gaffes and strokes of genius of those who observe and analyze the changes disrupting our world.

The authors review the most important work published over the last decade by a microcosm of experts, several of whom have received the Nobel Prize. They include Thomas Piketty, Philippe Aghion and Daniel Cohen from France, in addition to American giants like Larry Summers and Daron Acemoglu, one of the three laureates of the 2024 Nobel Prize for economics. And they don't overlook their illustrious predecessors, from Adam Smith to John Maynard Keynes and Milton Friedman.

The wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, the pandemic, the surge in populism and authoritarian regimes, the abrupt return of inflation, climate change, increasing inequality, the planet in danger of fragmentation and the irruption of a new digital age at the root of cryptocurrencies that have spun out of control and of AI's threatening to replace human beings with machines... All these shocks to our system and more have been gone over with a fine-tooth comb by our economists.

Researchers have never been better equipped to interpret numbers, variables and coefficients. Yet they didn't predict the return of inflation or anticipate the coronavirus's other destabilizing effects. Some of them defend their own interpretations no matter what, becoming radicalized and attracting wacky "neo-economists" to their ideas.

The authors help us see things more clearly in this maelstrom of contradictory ideas and competing theories.

**About the authors:** Pierre-Henri de Menthon spent most of his career in the financial and economic press before becoming the managing editor of the business magazine *Challenges*.

A lawyer, and former member of the Bar in both Paris and New York, Bruna Basini switched to journalism and has written for *Le Nouvel Économiste*, *L'Expansion* where she covers the world of business and macro-economic issues.

**Publication date:** March 20<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 368

**Retail price:** 24 €

**Available material:** PDF / uncorrected bound proofs

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# LES FEMMES AFGHANES N'ONT PLUS LE DROIT DE CHANTER

(Women in Afghanistan are no longer allowed to sing)

Hyam Zaytoun



**A**ugust 2024: We learn that a new law bans Afghan women from singing. This book is the story of how finding that out resonated with the author, who is both a Western woman and a Middle Eastern one: the issue of silence, and the price to pay for a voice. Why are women's voices so feared?

“Maybe that scrap of info took hold in my mind because it came to me from another woman, through a voice-mail message...”

Am I reacting because I'm an actress, and singing affects me because it's about art and freedom of expression? Is the fact that I joined an organization recently what's getting me to react, the energy and power of the group carrying me along? Or is it just my status as an actress that requires it, gives me the responsibility of being the voice of women and men who are less visible...

With this text, I'd like to make a connection, to work on my comprehension, and solidarity. To bring back through the present of writing, some experiences I had in another country, to remind myself about a kind of sisterhood: that I'm a Middle Eastern woman too...

And a western woman, one who has described the times my voice began to tremble: my feminine voice composed of both fear and rebellion, that wasn't taken into account if it contradicted a man's or an authority's.

**About the author:** Hyam Zaytoun was born in 1975 of a father with Egyptian roots and a French mother. After attending Conservatory, she became an actress, working for the stage, television and film. She is the author of a first book, *Vigile*, which won several awards, including the Chambéry First Novel Prize.

**Publication date:** April 10<sup>th</sup> 2025

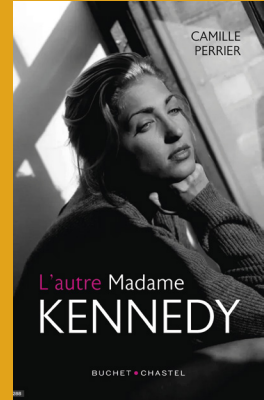
**Number of pages:** 176

**Retail price:** 19 €

**Available material:** PDF / uncorrected bound proofs

**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# L'AUTRE MADAME KENNEDY (The Other Ms Kennedy) Camille Perrier



A focus on the most fascinating heroine of the Kennedy saga.

**Spring, 1993:** Carolyn Bessette bumps into “John-John” while jogging in Central Park.

**September, 1996:** She marries him.

**July, 1999:** She dies with her sister in the crash of the small plane he was piloting.

Those three dates grabbed the world’s attention. They are the three acts (fairy-tale romance, marriage, tragedy) that studded the exceptional life of Carolyn Bessette Kennedy.

For years, she was laughed at for her apparent superficiality. Criticized for working in the world of fashion (Calvin Klein), for flaunting a “coolness” that seemed too chic to be true, for having gotten the most eligible bachelor in America in her clutches... Envied, harassed, fantasized about and now crowned queen, even though she always kept to herself. It took every bit of subtle insight Camille Perrier had to reveal the lucidity, fears and hopes of a woman who never liked to be in the limelight, even though she caught it so well.

Who says romance doesn’t make for great literature? This book, about Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, the most secretive and exposed woman of the 1990s, brilliantly disproves that notion.

**About the author:** Camille Perrier, journalist, is the editor-in-chief of *InfoChrétienne*.

**Publication date:** May 8<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 304

**Retail price:** 20 €

**Available material:** PDF / uncorrected bound proofs

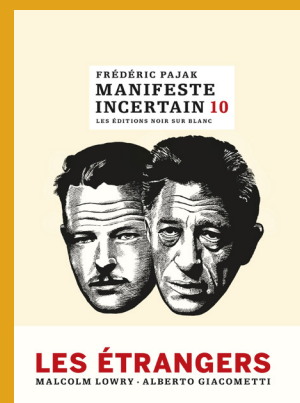
**Worldwide translation rights:** Libella (Buchet/Chastel)

# ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

# MANIFESTE INCERTAIN X, LES ÉTRANGERS

(Uncertain Manifesto #10, Strangers)

Frédéric Pajak



**T**hey left their native land very young; much later, they went back to it to die.

Born in England, Malcolm Lowry withdrew to Canada's Pacific coast. He spent two long stretches of time in Mexico, where he wrote his masterpiece, *Under the Volcano*.

Alberto Giacometti, on the other hand, who came from a remote valley in eastern Switzerland, settled in Paris, but his career didn't really take off until he went to New York.

Two foreigners, who carried a small plot of their native land on their backs, or at the very least, the temperament and some of the habits and customs learned in their youths.

Lowry built himself a cabin by the water's edge; he wouldn't have left it for more luxurious lodgings for anything in the world. When it burned down, he rebuilt an exact replica. Similarly, Giacometti spent his entire adult life living in a tiny studio in Montparnasse, a neighborhood he almost never left, except to visit his mother in Switzerland.

Two foreigners at the very heart of literary and artistic creativity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Two dropouts on the fringes of society, who become world-renowned, one as a writer the other as a visual artist. This tenth *Uncertain Manifesto* endeavors to recount their fates — the lean years, their everyday lives, their hopes and doubts and decisive encounters, until, at long last, consecration in their lifetimes.

Those biographical musings intertwine with a diversity of travel notes, memories and other reflections, particularly about "false friends."

Nearly two hundreds drawings call and respond to this protean narrative, for a singular reverie.

**About the author:** Frédéric Pajak was born in 1955 near Paris. He has had over a dozen works published, many of which he both wrote and drew. In 2012, the first volume of his series, *Le Manifeste Incertain* was released and each year, a new volume is published and focusses upon a different key artistic figure each time: Walter Benjamin, Ezra Pound, Vincent Van Gogh, Fernando Pessoa... These works were translated in the United States, Spain, Italy, Germany, Korea, China, Taiwan, Russia, Slovenia and Ukraine. In 2014, he received the Médicis Prize (essays category) for the third volume of his series. In 2019, he received the Goncourt Prize for Biography for the seventh volume and in 2021, he got the National Swiss Prize for Literature for his whole works.

**Publication date:** January 9<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 272

**Retail price:** 26 €

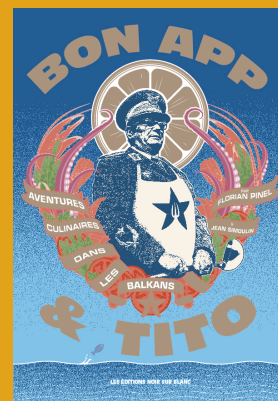
**Available material:** PDF / finished copy

**Worldwide translation rights:** Noir sur Blanc

# BON APP & TITO

## (Enjoy your meal and Tito !)

Florian Pinel & Jean Valnoir  
Simounin



**Y**ou've probably already tried *baklava* and *ćevapi*; but have you ever tasted *pogača* from Vis island? Slovenian *štruklji*? Albanese *suxhuk*? The fabulous fish dishes from Dalmatia, the grilled meat that Serbs are so passionate about, or the most Middle Eastern of European desserts?

After the success of their *The Goulash Archipelago*, which took us on a gastronomical tour of the ex-USSR, here is the latest book by Florian Pinel and Jean Valnoir Simoulin. Constantly on the lookout for the most unlikely places and unexpected dishes, our two partners-in-crime set out to explore the Balkans and their culinary delights. Alongside the over 80 recipes presented, mouthwatering texts recount the authors' travels as they go to hair-raising lengths to bring back anecdotes from across the former Yugoslavia.

After *The Goulash Archipelago*, the new book by Florian Pinel and Jean Valnoir Simoulin is a collection of travel notes from the Balkans as well as 80 recipes from the countries visited. An unusual book in a cheeky tone of voice!

**About the authors:** Florian Pinel is an AI engineer. A serious foodie, he has worked in several starred restaurants. For the last ten years, he has been blogging about his adventures in Eastern Europe at [foodperestroika.com](http://foodperestroika.com). He and Jean Valnoir Simoulin are the co-authors of *L'Archipel du goulache* (Noir sur Blanc, 2022).

Graphic designer, editor and filmmaker Jean Valnoir Simoulin, a music buff, is the grandson of a starred chef. He has designed album covers for over 300 groups (including Led Zeppelin) and was the driving force behind the first (and only) rock concert in North Korean history.

**Publication date:** May 15<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Number of pages:** 264

**Retail price:** 39 €

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**Worldwide translation rights:** Noir sur Blanc (excl. UK / US, Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia)

## CONTACT

Christine Bonnard Legrand  
Libella Group  
7 rue des Canettes  
75006 Paris

Tel : ++1 44 32 05 64

[christine.bonnardlegrand@libella.fr](mailto:christine.bonnardlegrand@libella.fr)

**[www.libellagroup.com](http://www.libellagroup.com)**

