

Haute cuisine, crime and punishment

Mise en Place

MARGOT VANDERSTRAETEN

Victor Werner, the son of a respected mushroom grower, is the chef at a three-star restaurant. He is cold-blooded, strict, authoritarian, and unwilling to compromise. When his sister dies, her last will stipulates that Victor must organize an exquisite party at which her diary will be read. Victor is afraid this might reveal a dark secret he once confided to her concerning the death of their father. On 23 December 1958 the marl pit where the mushrooms were grown collapsed and their father was one of the eighteen fatalities. Minutes earlier, Victor had asked his father to go there and collect his bike for him. He has turned the guilt over his father's death into unconditional perfectionism and a swollen sense of pride. However, the diary has an even bigger surprise in store.

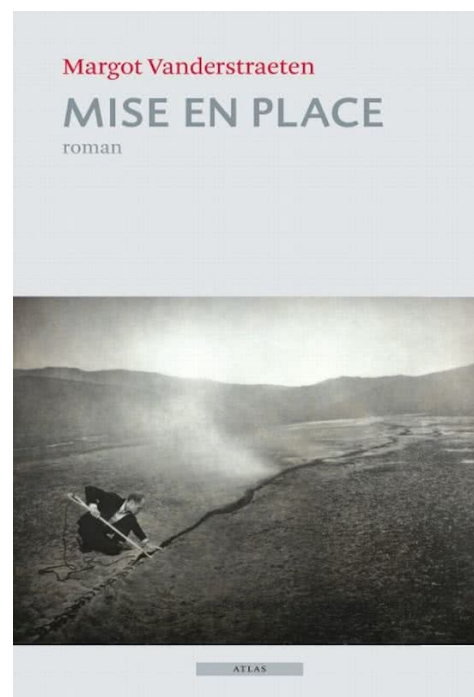
This book is worth three literary Michelin stars. It is a masterpiece.

LIBERALES

'Mise en place' offers a fascinating glimpse into the world of haute cuisine. But above all this is a gripping novel about how chance and random pieces of information, transformed into poignant memories and delusions, can have a lasting impact on somebody's life. Vanderstraeten creates an engaging human drama about a guilt-ridden man and manages to sustain the tension up until the surprising conclusion.

She writes the way a black widow makes love: without mercy.

KNACK



AUTHOR



Margot Vanderstraeten (b. 1967) is a freelance journalist and author. She debuted with the novel 'All People Bite' in 2002, which won the Flemish Debut Prize. 'Mise en place' offers the reader a fascinating glimpse into the world of haute cuisine. The novel was nominated for the Halewijn Prize. 'The Butterfly Effect', her fourth novel, tells a human story behind international terror. 'Mazel tov' tells the story of Vanderstraeten's experiences as a tutor in an Orthodox Jewish family. *Photo © Tom van Nuffel*

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