

FICTION

A sparkling and comical dystopian fable

Salt

MARC REUGEBRINK

Baron van Rüdersdorf Helmstadt discovers that the many miscarriages, diseases and deaths in Lende may be caused by the drinking of heavily polluted water from the local stream. He drums up a few villagers and has them bore hole after hole in the hope of finding clean drinking water. But however much the baron drills, he cannot find clean water. All that comes up is brine. Salt.

An exceptionally sensory narrative that revels in language ****

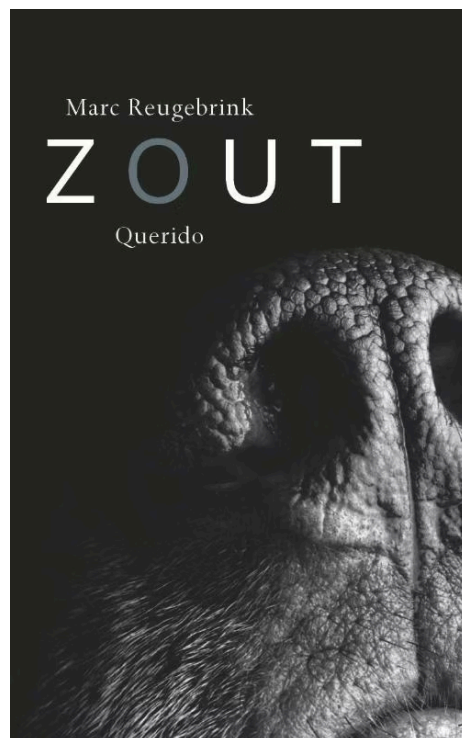
DE VOLKSKRANT

As the region becomes increasingly pitted with wells, the population slakes its thirst with hard liquor. It is the only thing safe to drink, but the alcoholic intoxication is not without consequences. The whole village, the baroness chief among them, suffers from worsening bouts of complete madness and derangement. The further the community drifts towards the abyss, the greater the fear of the apocalypse and the harder the baron searches for what he will never find.

'Salt' is a comedy, a rollercoaster of absurd incidents that shows mankind at its worst. With their backs against the wall and no longer able to fall back on the usual solutions, people resort to behaviour that allows them to forget. This dystopia is situated in an unspecified past, but manages to describe our own age in an eerily compelling way.

Let the literary good times roll with a devil-may-care attitude

NRC HANDELSBLAD



AUTHOR



Marc Reugebrink (b. 1960) is an author, poet and essayist. He was born in the Netherlands but has lived for years in Flanders. His work has been nominated for and crowned with various awards, including the prestigious Gouden Uil for *The Big Delay*. *The Belgian Marriage* is an account of modern Flanders, a novel about identity, differences, being foreign and wanting to belong. *The House of Salmon* is an impressive family novel. *Salt* is a sparkling ecological dystopian fable. Photo © Michiel Hendryckx

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