

Razor-sharp portrayal of displacement

# Penelope

JUDITH VANISTENDAEL

Penelope is a surgeon on the Syrian front. In the space of ten years she has completed more than thirty missions, and returning home is becoming increasingly difficult. While her daughter is growing up, has her first period and worries about the size of her nose, Penelope tries to save human lives under appalling conditions. Getting used to everyday life again is never easy, and this time the memory of a little girl she was unable to save has followed her back home. Penelope's mother is always worried, her sister criticizes her idealism, her husband seems to get on just fine without her and a colleague says that he would have gone to Syria too – if he hadn't had children.

**Breathtakingly beautiful. A brilliant narrative**

BRUZZ

Like the true master that she is, Judith Vanistendael paints the inner conflict of a woman who recognises that she cannot do anything about the growing distance between her and the home front. In this book it is Penelope who leaves her Odysseus to go to battle. In dynamic watercolour compositions with dialogues that reveal razor-sharp observation, Vanistendael wonders how to deal with a choice that is not a real choice at all.

**A deceptively simple watercolour style, thoughtful observations, astute dialogue: a captivating graphic novel**

DE MORGEN



## AUTHOR



Judith Vanistendael (b. 1974) is both a graphic novelist and a children's book illustrator. Her work in both genres is lauded and widely translated. Her deeply human stories and her elegant style with its judicious use of watercolour and pencil have earned her a solid reputation. She has been nominated for three Eisner Awards as well as the Grand Prix in Angoulême and was the recipient of the Jenny Smelik-IBBY Prize and the Willy Vandersteen prize. In 2022, she won the Bronzen Adhemar for her body of work.

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**TRANSLATION RIGHTS** Nicolas Lebedel - nicolas.lebedel@mediatoon.com

**TRANSLATION GRANTS** Lien Devos - lien.d@flandersliterature.be