

Is reconciliation possible following a terrorist attack?

He, She, and the Inevitable Us

ISH AIT HAMOU

The young Belgian-Moroccan Soumia gave two old friends a lift to the bus station. There the two carried out an attack. Without realising it, Soumia was an accomplice and given a prison sentence. She is now desperately trying to escape this past.

Tough old Fleming Luc lost his wife Maria in the attack. Wallowing in bitterness and pain, he is unable to let go of the past and rails at 'those bloody foreigners' to anyone prepared to listen.

Ait Hamou immediately pulls his readers in, and never lets go.

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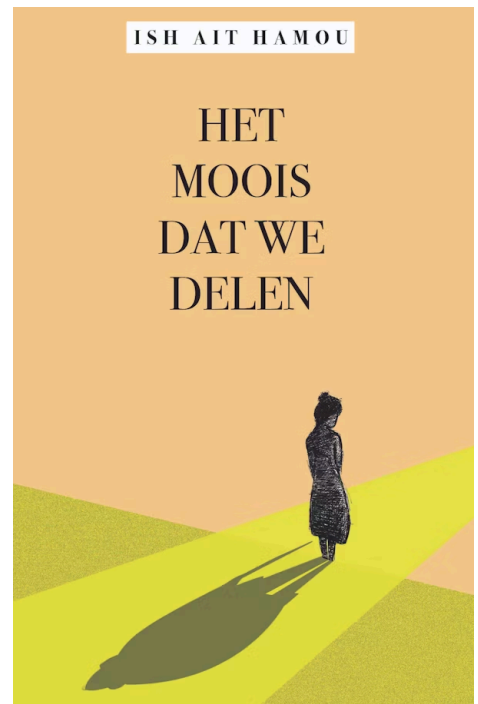
Soumia and Luc live in the same neighbourhood. When they meet by accident, they discover that their lives are more closely intertwined than they care to admit and they face some heart-rending decisions. He wants to know everything there is to know, aware that the truth will never be able to fill the bottomless void in his heart.

Can Luc forgive Soumia? Can Soumia understand that Luc blames her for the death of his wife, even though she was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time? But was she really?

In this novel Ish Ait Hamou goes in search of what binds us together, our longing for forgiveness and acceptance and our ability to understand each other in an increasingly polarised society.

Challenging and haunting. Ait Hamou is emerging as an important voice of his generation.

DE STANDAARD



AUTHOR



Ish Ait Hamou (b. 1987) is known to the general public as a dancer, choreographer and jury member on 'So You Think You Can Dance'. His love of dance and choreography is more than matched by his love of words. Having written stories from an early age, he made his debut in 2014. He has also written and directed a short film. Ait Hamou sees it as his task to build bridges between divided communities and for this he was awarded the Prijs van de Gelijkheid in 2016. 'The beauty we share' is his fourth novel. Photo © Shed Mojahid

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