

Humour is the best therapy

Someone Else

NELE VAN DEN BROECK

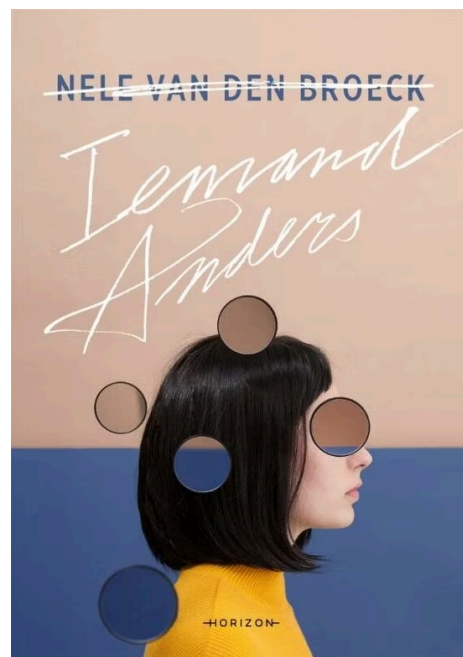
As the wife of the successful author Georg Sanctorum, Sandra places her life entirely at his service. She is his manager, agent, editor and muse. One morning she finds a letter in which Georg puts an end to their twelve-year relationship. Sandra breaks down and seeks refuge with her parents, two typical members of the middle classes who own a garden centre in the neatly parcelled-out Flemish countryside. With her parents attempting to avoid every conversation about her distress and the sessions with her therapist failing to rise above platitudes, Sandra decides to change her life radically and become someone else. With iron discipline, she will force herself into debauchery. From now on she'll smoke and drink every day, jump into bed with strangers and be lazy.

In her efforts to make short work of the old Mrs Sanctorum, Sandra joins up with the free-floating and artistic Alma, who gives her drugs for natural highs, and the taciturn Victor, who runs a shop in the village. Victor introduces her to the world of *shibari*, a kind of Japanese bondage, in which she eventually finds the self-confidence and psychological peace needed to write a novel of her own, published under the pseudonym Nele Van den Broeck.

Van den Broeck writes with pace and humour, and above all a great deal of self-mockery.

THE LOW COUNTRIES

In a phlegmatic, pointed tone, Van den Broeck takes aim at the snobbish literary world and the pressure to achieve in our hyper-individualized society. 'Someone Else' consists of short, incisive chapters in which vulnerability goes hand in hand with humour and poetic imagery. On her path of debauchery, Sandra Sanctorum will not succeed in becoming someone else, but she will be able to transform herself into the person she always was.



AUTHOR



Nele Van den Broeck (b. 1985) is a creative millipede. She is an author and theatre-maker, and a musician who uses the pseudonym Nele Needs A Holiday. In her columns, lyrics and prose she deals with subjects such as psychological vulnerability, hilarious failures and philosophical mundanity. Her work is a constant search for life's instruction manual.

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