

A picaresque novel about a would-be senile old codger

The Latecomer

DIMITRI VERHULST

The ruse allows Verhulst to use sardonic humour and Swiftian twists to disparage not only the scourge of dementia but also the brainless addiction to conventional routine and lack of freedom.

With his cynical sense of humour, Verhulst does not attempt to disguise the tragedy of human existence; on the contrary, he seems, above anything, to suggest that there is always the glimmer of hope of an escape route and, with a little determination, we can bring everything to a good conclusion.

A fascinating reading, with tenderness and razor-sharp satire side by side

WRITERS WRITE

In autumn of his life, a retired librarian wants to escape the dreary monotony his bossy wife has imposed on him. There is only one, extraordinary way in which he can regain the self-esteem that his marriage has dented. He plans to gradually feign dementia until he finds himself in a rest home, freed from all social and familial pressure. He pulls a virtuoso fast one on everybody, by pretending to be a demented, incontinent old codger nearing the end of his days. The role of his life and one that becomes even more promising when a senile childhood sweetheart and a former SS officer turn up in the home.

Will often have you in fits of laughter, only to grab you the next moment unexpectedly by the throat

DE STANDAARD



AUTHOR



Dimitri Verhulst (b. 1972) is one of the most successful contemporary writers in the Dutch language. His breakthrough came in 2006 with the novel 'The Misfortunates'. It won several awards, was made into a movie and is now in its sixty-first reprint. He is renowned for his pitch-black worldview, his tragicomedies, his juicy language, his engagement and his intimate portraits. Photo © Ringel Goslinga

ORIGINAL TITLE De laatkomer (2013, Atlas Contact, 144 pp.)

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