

A classic of magical realism, filmed
by André Delvaux

The Train of Inertia

JOHAN DAISNE

After a mysterious journey in a train populated with sleeping passengers, three train travellers find themselves in a strange, shadowy land, a timeless transition area, to which each responds in his own way.

They wander somewhere between life and death, not knowing where their journey will end. One of them ultimately returns to this world, where he later discovers that he has been involved in a train crash.

A superbly written novella in which the surreal is approached in a matter-of-fact, realist manner.

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Although set in an increasingly strange and unreal environment, the surreal is viewed with a sober, businesslike approach. The narrative pace is slow, but that does not detract from the tension or the reader's involvement in the story.

In this book, Daisne attains a level of thought that can be found in few other authors. Dostoyevsky, for example. The book is therefore highly recommended to anyone who would like to glimpse deeper into the human soul.

'The Train of Inertia' was adapted for film by André Delvaux as 'Un soir, un train' in 1968.

Daisne was primarily known as the father of magic realism in Dutch literature.

HET NIEUWSBLAD



AUTHOR



Johan Daisne was the pseudonym of Flemish author Herman Thiery (1912-1978). He studied Economics and Slavic languages, receiving his doctorate in 1936. In 1945 he was appointed chief librarian of the city of Ghent. Together with Hubert Lampo, Daisne was one of the pioneers of magical realism in Dutch-language literature. His stories combine dream and reality and are often a string of unexpected and astonishing events, resulting in a philosophical view of life.

ORIGINAL TITLE De trein der traagheid (1950, Manteau, 118 pp.)

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