

Original and provocative,
sometimes absurd

Assumptions

ANNELIES VERBEKE

This 'novel-in-stories' displays how people often believe they know more than they actually do. They apply labels or draw premature conclusions and, by doing so, cause others to suffer. Alternatively, they are left behind – all alone – with assumptions that are valid. Annelies Verbeke has an eye for embarrassing situations and daily absurdities that affect those who live close to us, or the person lodged within ourselves.

A lady on a mission and a true diva of short stories

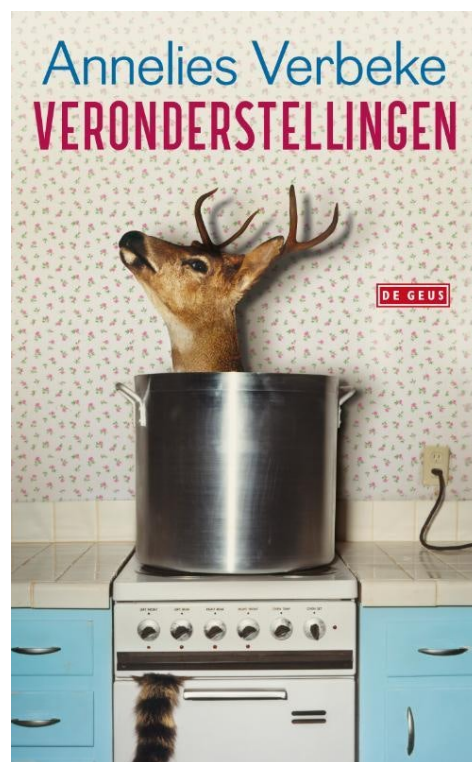
DE MORGEN

In the story 'The Right', Didier Van Ranst's suspicions about his cleaning lady cause him to lose his grip on reality. In 'Nearby', love and jealousy both whisper their own truths to Lady LaToya. In 'Christmas', the 17-year-old Nicolette De Puyt is convinced a lady in a nursing home for the elderly needs her help.

In this collection of fifteen stories, Verbeke plays a beautiful game with fiction and reality, with believing and exposing. The characters' assumptions are depicted so realistically and convincingly that readers find themselves going along with them too. But once confronted with reality, they have to admit they were carried away by their own assumptions. Verbeke is the indisputable queen of short story collections, and that is no assumption.

A masterly collection of stories, highly intelligent and hugely comical *****

DE STANDAARD



AUTHOR



Annelies Verbeke (b. 1976) is a leading figure in Flemish literature. With translations in over 20 countries, her novel 'Slaap' is the most widely translated Flemish debut of all time. Her love of the short story form has made her an advocate of the genre. In addition, she has written columns, scripts, theatre texts, a graphic novel and a children's book. What makes her characters so powerful is their angular personality: they are familiar in their ordinariness, but also have a dark and unexpected side. Keywords: snappy, slightly absurdist, wistful nostalgia with keen observations. In 2022, she received the Ultima for Literature (The Flemish state prize for literature). *Photo © Alex Salinas*

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