

## FICTION

An impressive illustration of human alienation

# Minuet

LOUIS PAUL BOON

In 'Minuet', a man works eight hours a day in the deep-freeze basement of a factory. In that polar world he is accompanied only by his own fears and thoughts, and for hours on end he has conversations with himself. At home, he withdraws to his collection of newspaper clippings about brutal rapes and gruesome murders. His wife is his complete opposite, being optimistic in nature and eager to climb the social ladder. Her marriage is thrown off balance however, when she falls pregnant by a travelling salesman, and a 12-year-old pubescent girl, reminiscent of Nabokov's Lolita, comes to help in the household.

## One of the greatest figures in Flemish fiction

DE NIEUWE GAZET

As the characters come to life in the triangular relationship, Boon masterfully depicts them as an isolated man, a shameless girl and a materialistic woman, acting in a somewhat strange allegory of our world. The neurotic protagonist poses critical questions about religion, monarchy and the State and a generational conflict is staged between the hard-working middle-class woman and the rebellious child-temptress. The story's claim to realism is accented by authentic newspaper reports of murders and rapes, printed at the top of the pages, exposing the perversity of modern man.

## Obsessive

VRIJ NEDERLAND



## AUTHOR



**Louis Paul Boon** (1912-1979) is the author of a large and rich oeuvre spanning several genres: from the compelling historical epics to his sharp, witty work as a newspaper columnist and his tongue-in-cheek, scabrous novels. Boon certainly competes with Hugo Claus for the title of most important writer of Flemish literature in the twentieth century.

**ORIGINAL TITLE** Menuet (1955, De Arbeiderspers, 144 pp.)

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