

# From sweet-seller to bodyguard

# Mikel

JUDITH VANISTENDAEL & MARK BELLIDO

Miquel is a sweet-seller who lives the life of a bon viveur with his wife and two children in the beautiful south of Spain. Money is always a problem, though, and Miquel's dream of becoming a writer also causes problems in the family. On New Year's Day, he decides to make some big changes to his life. To write a new book, he needs a good story and he's sure he'll find it in the Basque Country, where bodyguards are urgently needed to protect local politicians from the Basque separatist group, ETA. Being a bodyguard, though, turns out not to be so much a job as a way of life: the uncertainty and the long working days destroy his family life, and fear permeates everything.

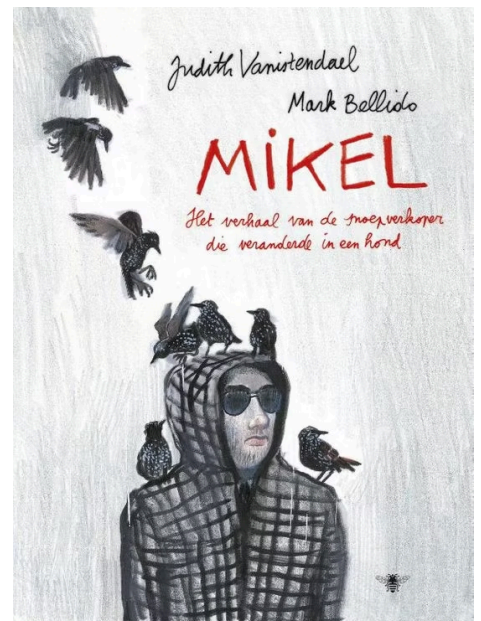
Mountain vistas and street-shaking explosions alike unfold in vibrant scrawls of color

PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

With its pure, sometimes garish pigments, 'Mikel' tells a true story, based on the experiences of the author, Mark Bellido. With her brilliant use of colour, Judith Vanistendael depicts the light of a wild and rainy Basque Country. Reconciling the aesthetic demands with the tense style of the narrative, she scratches at the page, smearing it with colours and shapes, with streaks and overlapping images, to compose sublime double pages that become etched on the memory.

A masterpiece of atmosphere and empathy, a must-have book of the year

FOCUS VIF



## AUTHORS



Judith Vanistendael (b. 1974) is both a graphic novelist and a children's book illustrator. Her work in both genres is lauded and widely translated. Her deeply human stories and her elegant style with its judicious use of watercolour and pencil have earned her a solid reputation. She has been nominated for three Eisner Awards as well as the Grand Prix in Angoulême and was the recipient of the Jenny Smelik-IBBY Prize and the Willy Vandersteen prize. In 2022, she won the Bronzen Adhemar for her body of work. **Mark Bellido** (b. 1975) is the author of books including the novel 'Venus vestida de azul', and some graphic novels in collaboration with Wauter Mannaert and Judith Vanistendael. He spent four years protecting Basque politicians against ETA.

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