

Small lives hit by major drama

Barely Body

FILIP ROGIERS

Flawless stories like these haven't appeared in Flanders for a long time.

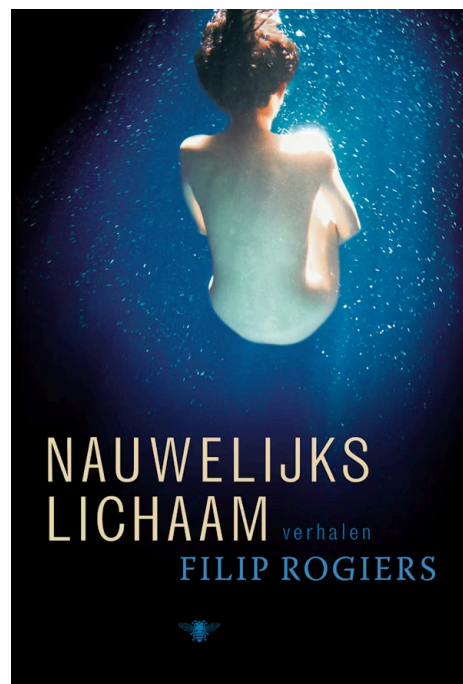
KNACK

'Barely Body' is a collection of five classic existentialist tales about people who are alive only in the physical sense. Their dreams are mercilessly eroded by the ravages of time, turning them into pale shadows of who they used to be. Filip Rogiers writes about small people on the margins of society, who are overwhelmed by big problems. His restrained, intense style is perfectly in line with the smouldering volcanoes his protagonists – mostly women – are.

A mature debut

DEBUT PRIZE JURY

Bérénice, the main character of the title story, is an ordinary cleaning lady made extraordinary by her faults and imperfections. Step by step, she wants to reclaim the power and autonomy she has lost. She looks for ways to access her repressed sexuality and also wants to tell her boss the truth for once, after years of biting her tongue. Bérénice is a crushed figure, of the kind that appears frequently in Rogiers' work. The other stories in this collection also feature broken lives and the dreams that preceded them. And each of the characters reaches a point of no return, followed by an outburst of revenge: dark, explosive and, invariably, without a happy end.



AUTHOR



Filip Rogiers (b. 1966) is the author of novels, short stories and non-fiction books. As a journalist he has a reputation for being one of the most empathetic voices in Flemish journalism. Rogiers relentlessly sides with the underdog, often using contemporary Belgium as a depressing backdrop. He has a particularly good eye for everyday drama. His short story collection 'Barely Body' earned him the Flemish Debut Prize. *Photo © Koen Broos*

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PRIZES Debut Prize

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