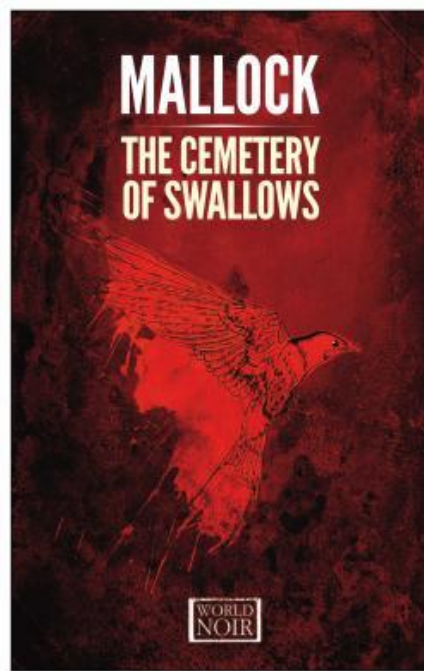




The Cemetery of Swallows

Mallock , Steven Rendall (Translator) , Jean-Denis Bruet-Ferreol

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One day, Manuel Gemoni travels to the other end of the world to kill an old man in the Dominican Republic. When questioned by police, Manuel can only explain his bizarre actions by saying, "I killed him because he had killed me." Unable to comprehend why an ordinary family man with no history of violent behavior would go to such lengths to kill a man he didn't even know, Police Commissioner Amédée Mallock decides to investigate. In order to save Manuel from death, the misanthropic Mallock must immerse himself in the harsh tropical jungles of the Dominican Republic and the snow-covered streets of Paris.

The Cemetery of Swallows Details

Date : Published April 1st 2014 by Europa Editions (first published 2012)

ISBN : 9781609451868

Author : Mallock , Steven Rendall (Translator) , Jean-Denis Bruet-Ferreol

Format : Paperback 272 pages

Genre : Mystery, Cultural, France, Crime

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From Reader Review The Cemetery of Swallows for online ebook

Elisa says

As a fan of Fred Vargas and Pierre Lemaitre, I was really looking for a new French author to love. Unfortunately, this is not it. Too slow and filled with unnecessary details, I didn't connect with the characters and simply didn't like the plot at all.

Nancy Oakes says

Once in a while I pick up a crime novel that literally blows me away. Cemetery of Swallows, published by Europa Editions as part of their World Noir series is one of them. By the last few chapters I was literally talking to the main character out loud saying "come on! I know you'll figure this out! I know there's got to be a logical explanation!" I don't tend to get that excited in the normal course of crime reading, but the twistiness of this novel put me through the wringer and kept me there up until the last minutes.

French police superintendent Amédée Mallock is famous for his work on difficult cases. He lives alone, and considers himself "the king of the homebodies" since having lost his wife and son some years ago. He has haunting and recurring dreams about his little boy, and never talks about him to anyone. He's a great cop and he has a great team. One of his team members is Julie, a captain in the police force, and a week before we first meet Mallock on a plane to the Dominican Republic, she tells him she must take a special leave because of her brother. Her distress is so obvious that Mallock has to ask her why. She relates a very unusual story to her boss that started a week earlier. One morning, her brother Manuel Gemoni was watching a video a friend gave him about cigars (which he's passionate about) and cigar making in the Dominican Republic, when he recognizes a face on the screen. He doesn't know who it is exactly, but he knows he has to kill him. Abandoning his wife and baby, he travels to the island nation, where he waits in a place he knows the guy will eventually show up. When the opportunity arises, Gemoni kills him in front of a number of witnesses and is himself wounded and then arrested. The only thing Julie really knows is that upon his arrest, her brother made a bizarre statement that no one understands:

"I killed him because he had killed me."

I have a post about this novel on the crime page of my reading journal blog , but for now I'll say that Cemetery of Swallows is not only innovative, but it's also one of those books where you literally have to wait until the very end -- only then does the light bulb go on and you get to the "aha" payoff moment. It also offers armchair detectives a puzzling challenge. I've also decided on the strength of this one that whatever this guy writes in the future, I'll be buying as soon as it's published.

Aely Nah says

C'est sur le conseil de l'auteur lui même que j'avais offert ce tome à mon papa pour le lui faire découvrir. Ayant déjà lu moi-même Les larmes de Pancrace ainsi que Les visages de Dieu, je l'ai donc lu avec un certain recul.

Manu Gemoni, le frère de Julie, la Julie de Mallock, un de ces cinq flics qui l'entourent et le soutiennent dans

la résolution des enquêtes, chacun avec ses qualités et ses connaissances particulières, vient d'être arrêté pour meurtre en République dominicaine. À son interrogatoire il a avoué son crime et l'a expliqué par une phrase sibylline : "je l'ai tué parce qu'il m'avait tué". C'est sur cette énigme que notre bon commissaire part vers Saint-Domingue pour tenter de découvrir le fin mot de l'histoire et éventuellement d'innocenter Manu.

Sur fond de vaudou, de dictature et de torture nous découvrons au travers des yeux du commissaire ainsi que des commentaires de ses acolytes régionaux un île pleine de surprises et de contradictions.

Une chose est sûre la plume poétique de Mallock est toujours là. Les paysages, les décors, le climat même, tout semble vous sauter au visage tellement les descriptions sont pleines de vie et de couleurs.

Pourtant sa plume vous transporte aussi dans l'horreur des découvertes. Car ce semblant de paradis n'en est pas un. Ces habitants chaleureux et souriants ont hélas vécu pire que la canicule ou ces tempêtes tropicales parfois mortelles. Une atmosphère lourde parfois vous étreint le cœur à la lecture des exactions commises par les autorités en place. Et lorsque vous découvrez Manu et ses conditions de détention alors qu'il est blessé, vous avez la sensation d'être passé de l'autre côté du miroir. Mais contrairement à Alice, derrière n'est pas synonyme de pays des merveilles. Ici il serait plutôt devant. Et derrière, nous découvrons le pays des secrets, du sordide et des malheurs.

Nous découvrons aussi notre Mallock sous un jour encore plus différent que dans ces autres livres. Nous l'avons vu sensible et plein d'empathie pour les familles dans *Les visages de Dieu*, plein de déductions à la Sherlock dans *Les larmes de Pancrace*, ici nous découvrons plus avant Mallock le sorcier, Dede le devin comme le surnomme ses hommes. Et en même temps un Mallock dépassé par l'irrationnel, un irrationnel qui n'est pas, pour une fois, de son fait.

J'avoue avoir apprécié le connaître déjà. Cette découverte quasi irrationnelle, ses visions troubles pour le néophyte que nous sommes et les réflexions qui en découlent auraient pu troubler le lecteur qui le découvre seulement. Pour moi cela a été une plongée dans les affres et les méandres de son moi et de son inconscient si fantasque et psychédélique aussi. L'aide de cette vieille sorcière et de sa drogue y sont probablement pour quelque chose mais notre Mallock semble alors sortir hors de lui même et par la même occasion nous entraîner avec lui dans ses visions. Visions qui pour les connaisseurs prendront tout leur essor au fil des pages et des chapitres. Mais le lecteur sans entraînement que nous sommes parfois peut se perdre dans les méandres de ses pensées délirantes.

Alors quand après le climat chaud et humide de St Domingue, le ciel neigeux et froid de Paris nous réveille frileusement, ce retour nous sort doucement mais sûrement de cette transe irréelle. Pourtant une fois la crise mystique pourrait-on dire terminée ce bon commissaire nous reparaît comme régénéré et le fil tenu qui nous trainait encore derrière lui nous ramène dans l'enquête comme l'effet d'un élastique. Est-ce le froid revigorant ou ce changement brutal de climat ? mais notre Mallock nous entraîne toujours plus loin.

Les enchaînements de découvertes, les éléments à la fois véridiques et invraisemblables dans leur contexte, la réincarnation des âmes, tout cela nous enfonce de plus en plus dans cette enquête derrière lui.

Pour mon esprit féru de légendes, mythologies ou superstitions, le chemin que prend alors cette enquête devient pavé de tentations, de bonheurs particuliers et d'apprentissages en tout genre. Que ce soit le développement des sciences du comportement, la mise en avant de la sémiologie, ou bien celle plus ancienne de l'hypnose, notre esprit ne peut que s'ouvrir pour continuer à suivre cette enquête. Le lecteur pragmatique et rationnel, refusant l'irréel ou les réponses parfois floues devra faire un effort sur lui même pour oublier ses défauts, et suivre les chemins détournés empruntés par Mallock et ses amis. Il sera alors récompensé par une enquête déroutante et entêtante qui nous entraînera vers des faits passés et présents, des histoires dans l'Histoire, des visages empreints de dignité et d'autres de cruauté. Vous ne pourrez rester insensible à ce défilement d'honneur et d'horreur. Les secrets les mieux gardés ne peuvent lui résister. Car même les ombres du passé se confient à lui.

C'est encore un mélange de poésie et de vulgaire (ici dans le sens du commun, de tous les jours) que nous assène la plume de l'auteur. Vous ressentez le climat, la beauté et la cruauté de cette île paradisiaque puis la froidure et les secrets enfouis qui semblent tels des zombies affamés de chair humaine ressortir à la surface. Chaque mot pèse sur votre cœur comme sur celui des protagonistes. L'irrationnel vous semble envisageable

car tout comme le commissaire Mallock vous vous laissez convaincre par les faits découverts.
En plus de suivre cette enquête, votre cerveau en arrière fond tourne en boucle une question de croyance ou de doute.

Peut-on finir par croire à l'irrationnel lorsque l'on est pragmatique ?

Peut-on oublier l'irrationnel pour ne se concentrer que sur les faits ?

Comme d'habitude la solution vous surprendra par sa simplicité et son audace. Audace car cette vérité a tout fait pour rester cachée de nous et le serait demeurée sans le flair et les déductions de notre bon commissaire.

Tout alors s'éclaire et en même temps se trouble sur les dernières pages.

C'est encore une enquête menée avec brio pour notre commissaire. Mais en même temps une ode à l'amitié, la fidélité et au courage des braves ainsi qu'une dénonciation des horreurs de la guerre et des dictatures.

Merci Mr Mallock pour ce moment de lecture intense et toujours surprenante.

Mycoton32 says

<http://www.leslecturesdemylene.com/20...>

17/20 - En bref, un thriller qui nous réserve des surprises jusqu'aux derniers mots, on ne sait pas où donner de la tête, l'ambiance est diablement bien faite et on passe à nouveau un bon moment avec Mallock. Le commissaire est un homme intelligent, qui ne lâche jamais rien et va toujours au bout de ses idées. Il sait aussi écouter les autres et malgré l'horreur et le malheur, aller de l'avant pour le bien de tous ! Des personnages et des histoires à découvrir absolument !!

Mackay says

A peculiar, highly entertaining, thought-provoking French mystery. While "Mallock," the author, is not Fred Vargas - the doyenne of amazingly peculiar and wonderful French police procedurals - this one certainly kept me guessing. I wonder if the author's nom de plume, Mallock, was a subtle form of commentary, as the Detective Superintendent is also named Mallock, and his persona changes a bit when he is called that and when he calls himself by his first name - the narrative also changes a bit. The French rules of the genre are nothing the same as English/American, and this one, which makes readers ponder the possibilities of reincarnation, is a mind-bender with a satisfying denouement.

Greg says

Review hopefully to come....

The author also has given the world this:

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1...>

Boobs. Maybe it sounds classier in French.

Orsodimondo says

CRONACHE BARBARE

Questo secondo Mallock che leggo riceve una stellina di gradimento in meno rispetto al primo che ho letto perché mi è piaciuto meno.

E mi è piaciuto meno perché, secondo me, le serie possono pagare peggio, i personaggi delle serie possono trasformarsi in routine, lo scrittore può accusare stanchezza, le situazioni diventare ripetitive, latita la sorpresa...

Il che, purtroppo, si traduce in minore godimento per il lettore.

Il problema maggiore, probabilmente, si ha quando il protagonista diventa il modello ideale dello scrittore, che s'impersona nel suo eroe, gli attribuisce tutte le qualità che vorrebbe avere, e quel pizzico di difetti accettabilissimi che ritiene di possedere (un esempio indigeno è sicuramente l'avvocato Guerrieri e il suo creatore, Carofiglio).

Succede così che chi scrive si riflette nel suo personaggio principale con risultato imbarazzante: il commissario Amédée Mallock, in questo romanzo, è il prototipo del 'piacimento' a causa e per responsabilità del Mallock scrittore (pseudonimo di Jean Denis Bruet Ferreol). Stucchevole, a tratti.

Per il resto, l'inizio meglio del prosieguo: non solo per il viaggio a Santo Domingo, ma anche perché questa volta l'indagine è un po' troppo lunga e alla fine sembra quasi esserci un doppio finale un po' ridondante.

Il commissario Mallock questa volta usa meno aiutini del solito (alcuni suoi aiutini sono: Ayahuasca di Oba, il fiore che piange - lo yagué, la liana della morte - armina - armalina - tetraidroarmina - armolo - armalolo - dimeltitriptamina - iboigana - peyote, oltre al più generico oppio, il single malt, i sigari avana...), ma si muove sempre su un terreno che sconfina nella parapsicologia e si scontra ancora una volta con gente che ama smembrare, dilaniare, decapitare, divorare, torturare in genere.

Se quell'essere superiore esisteva davvero era un dio di miseria, non di misericordia. Un vecchio diventato nel corso dei secoli un po' cinico e terribilmente disincantato di fronte al fallimento palese della sua creazione, opera sempre più contaminata da un'altra forza. Chi altri, se non il diavolo, poteva oggi dare un po' di credito all'esistenza di dio?

[le minuscole sono mie, non di Mallock]

Monica says

Wonderfully strange murder case which involves past life regression(perhaps), hypnotic suggestion

(certainly), and a wide variety of potent psychotropic dugs. And a little witchcraft. Maybe.

Superintendent Amedee Mallock is flying to the Dominican Republic to extradite Manuel Gemoni, the brother of Julie, a member of his Paris investigations team. Gemoni has been arrested for murdering a much hated elderly local, and his only explanation is that he had to kill the man because the man had killed him. Everyone is terrified of the dead man, whose thuggish bodyguards are still very much in evidence. They wounded Gemoni when he committed the murder and both the French ambassador and the local police want him out of the way before they finish him off.

In an attempt to learn more about the victim, and any possible connection to Gemoni, Mallock is taken to consult a local wise woman whose drugs take him into the grave and beyond, and who has an underground grotto which may hold the lost amber room of Catherine the Great. Or not.

It turns out the victim was a Nazi war criminal of the most horrific sort, but proving it, and making it work in Gemoni's defense is another matter. The criminology is fascinating. It takes a combination of forensics, hypnotherapy, archaeology and psychotropics to solve the mysteries.

Mallock is intuitive, loyal to a fault, appreciative of pretty women, fine food, a good cigar and the occasional psychedelic, but still a loner at heart, retreating to Fort Mallock (his tech laden apartment) to work out his questions. The history and politics of the Dominican Republic play an important role in the story as does the working of the French judicial system. The approach/avoid ballet between the French and Dominican officials and between the French judge, the attorneys and the cops are beyond entertaining.

Strong plot, great characters, brilliantly written with surprising comic flashes. It's a terrific read.

Marina Sofia says

Rather unusual take on crime fiction. Not just one but two atmospheric locations for your money: the Dominican Republic shimmering in the heat, and then, by way of contrast, a stormy and snow-covered Paris. Add a sensitive detective, who tries his best to help the brother of one of his team members, a dash of the supernatural, a soupcon of nasty history, but also some solid detective work... and you have a French crime novel which will be compared with Fred Vargas.

David Hesson says

Awesome - unlike anything I've read before.

Ashley says

I received this as a First Reads book. The beginning is really intriguing. This Frenchman named Manuel leaves his home and family to go kill someone in the Dominican Republic after becoming obsessed with him from a tape. His explanation "I killed him because he killed me." After that Superintendent Mallock is sent by the French authorities to bring Manuel back for trial. Mallock having met the man previously, also sets out to figure out why this happened.

This book is really good with atmosphere and back history. The characters are very vivid. What I really liked was how different the story line is from a lot of the other detective novels I've read.

Andy Weston says

Is it better to leave your review until a couple of days after finishing the book, just to mull it over for a while? Perhaps in some cases, but I doubt it here. If that's the case I will update the review.

Cemetery of Swallows is as good a crime fiction book as I have read. If the genre takes any criticism for being samey or formulaic, then this stands up as a great counter-example.

Part historical, part noir, part literary, but mainly crime fiction, Mallock's novel is gripping from start to finish. The premise which the story is based on shouts loudly that the book needs to be read from the outset: "I killed him because he killed me". The writing is captivating also and manages just the right balance between the life of the detective and his peers, during a particularly snowy Paris December, and powerful passages of the story of Gemoni.

More than in other genres the crime fiction reader needs the novel to end well. In this respect Mallock delivers with aplomb, and those clever twists, which make a book stand out, are there also. Its not for the squeamish, and yet with a humour content that can rise a dry chuckle.

I will read more Mallock, but I won't expect quite the same entertainment. Certainly in the UK this novel got some media coverage, but really not very much. Thankfully Bruet-Ferroel (no wonder he writes as 'Mallock') has dedicated his time to crime writing since 2000, so we can expect more.

A quote to finish, from late in the book, to demonstrate that the 'noir' content plays along with the 'literary' one:

"Too often, life answers questions we haven't asked. It tricks us, traps us, catches up with us. Very often we fall. But we get up again, as we did when we were children"

This a great stuff, the sort of book that reminds you why it's worth dedicating time trudging through those 3 and barely 4 star books, as every now and then, something quite special like this crops up.

Christine Van Heertum says

Mallock se lance dans une enquête pour le moins étrange : Julie, un de ses lieutenants, lui fait part de son incrédulité lorsqu'elle a appris que son frère, le doux Manu, a tué de sang froid un vieillard en République Dominicaine. Mallock parviendra-t-il à démêler le vrai du faux dans cette histoire qui fait remonter une vérité malsaine liée aux exactions de SS durant la deuxième guerre mondiale ? Entre hypnoses et réincarnation, les certitudes du commissaire seront mises à rude épreuve.

Je vais être honnête : j'adore Mallock, mais « Le cimetière des hirondelles » n'est pas son meilleur opus. Trop « borderline » à mon avis, cette histoire ne cadre pas avec le personnage de Mallock que je me suis imaginé au fil de mes lectures. La première partie se situe en République Dominicaine et manque, selon moi, de profondeur. La mythique Chambre d'ambre y tient une part importante, pour ensuite être abandonnée dans les 2 autres parties du livre. La mention de cette pièce n'apporte donc rien au récit qui n'a accroché mon

attention que dans la 3e et dernière section du livre. En résumé, petite déception, mais cela n'ôte en rien mon envie de continuer à lire Mallock.

astried says

Two books in a row with cemetery on its title.

I haven't read many french detective books, just 1 Simenon I think. I like them more than americans but eventhough it gripped me when I read them it didn't get me addicted like camilleri or ngaio marsh.

This one has a good balance between being angsty and light. I'm still ambivalent about the ending and the "moral" it tried to convey. i'm not sure if i actually like mallock and his group of blood brotherhood, his right hand whose fingers were being explained over and over again. i'm not keen on elite super team.

3.5stars

Karline05 Un brin de lecture says

<http://www.unbrindelecture.com/2016/0...>

Thriller passionnant et très attachant, agréable à lire et qui, malgré l'histoire sombre et pour le moins tortueuse qu'il contient, teintée d'irréalité, réussit à nous faire sourire, grâce à une bonne dose d'humour. Cependant, c'est écrit d'une telle manière qu'on ne peut pas s'empêcher d'apprécier ce récit, débutant à Saint-Domingue et se poursuivant dans un univers surprenant et irréaliste sous un PARIS écrasé par la canicule, détaillé et fort bien construit... Et de plus qui nous tient en en haleine tout du long Un vrai Beau Livre !!!
