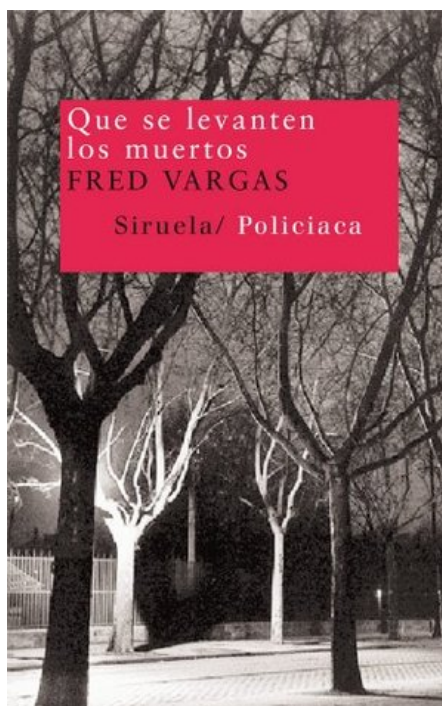




Que se levanten los muertos

Fred Vargas , Helena del Amo (Translator)

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Después de El hombre de los círculos azules, en esta nueva intriga policiaca nos encontramos a «tres evangelistas»: Mathias, Lucien y Marc, tres jóvenes historiadores en paro y sin un céntimo, que intentarán resolver un caso muy complicado. Mathias es duro, casi de piedra, como la edad prehistórica de la que se ocupa; Lucien es un estudioso de la primera guerra mundial, y Marc, un medievalista muy nervioso. No parece el equipo idóneo para resolver un caso de homicidio que hunde sus raíces en un pasado lejano, lleno de rencor y celos. Pero, a veces, la intuición y la capacidad de análisis consiguen más de lo que se pueda imaginar. El escenario: una calle del centro de París, donde todo el mundo se conoce y nada pasa desapercibido.

Que se levanten los muertos Details

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Celine says

On s'identifie bien à ces anti-héros type ancien premier de la classe. Semi-intello, semi-marginaux. L'histoire est très bien ficelée.

Vivienne says

A superb work of French crime fiction from the always wonderful Fred Vargas. It was the winner of the inaugural 2006 International CWA Dagger, a prize that Vargas also won in 2008 and 2009 . While I have read all of her other books I had somehow skipped over this one. Now with a second novel featuring the three evangelists being published in English I thought it the perfect time to read the first.

This was a classic mystery; quite low key with a group of historians and a retired policeman solving the mystery of the disappearance of their next door neighbour, a wealthy and famous opera singer. As with the Adamsberg series, there is a great deal of eccentricity and a terrific sense of place.

Lectrice Hérétique says

J'ai dévoré ce livre en moins de deux. Debout les morts nous présente un insolite trio d'historiens fauchés, Marc le médiéviste, Mathias le préhistorien, et Lucien le contemporainiste de 14/18, qui occupent chacun un étage d'une baraque pourrie qu'ils partagent avec un vieux flic réputé lui aussi pourri, parrain et oncle de Marc. Les "évangélistes" ont chacun un caractère bien à eux, leurs manies, forcément liées à leurs passions et spécialités, ils sont excentriques, obsessionnels, sombres. Le style de Vargas est encore une fois un délice linguistique. Elle pratique l'argot poétique, la métaphore parlante, l'imagerie verbale. Les dialogues sont vifs, plein d'humour et de finesse. Ça frise parfois le surréalisme, mais ça reste d'une cohérence infaillible. L'intrigue est délicieusement tordue, efficace, les rebondissements pas assez nombreux pour être lourds, juste bien dosés et bien placés. Pour l'avoir rencontrée à Frontignan cette année, j'ai constaté que Vargas pratique le même humour que ses personnages, mordant, vif, intelligent et irrésistible, avec un naturel confondant. Incontournable.

Gregoire says

Un des premiers Vargas Met en scène les 3 'saints' Lucien, Matthias et Marc, tous trois historiens de périodes différentes, plus ou moins marginaux, plus ou moins sans emploi, avec leurs manies mais aussi leurs regards et leurs intelligences, ainsi que l'oncle/parrain de Marc, ancien flic ... tous les quatre réunis récemment sous un même toit et tous les quatre intrigués par la disparition de leur voisine.

Impossible que Vargas n'ait pas côtoyé - j'allais dire : étudié - de tels êtres humains tant ils sont plus vrais que nature ; impossible de croire qu'ils sortent uniquement de son imagination Mais quel talent pour nous

restituer, au moyen de mots ordinaires ou faussement anodins, leurs portraits, leurs travers, leurs motivations, leurs actes, avec quelle authenticité ...

J'ai adoré la traversée de Paris avec lancer de caillou (denrée rare sur nos chaussées goudronnées) du pied par Marc et tant d'autres détails à la fois ordinaires et magiques

Quand j'en ai marre, qu'aucune histoire ne retient mon attention (manque de style, manque de fond, manque d'originalité etc) je me plonge dans un Vargas pour le plaisir de la langue française

c'est peut-être là son seul défaut, s'adresser prioritairement à des lecteurs de culture française

Ses références (tics de langage, culinaires, marabout, bout 'd'ficelle...) me parlent comme elles ne parleront peut-être pas autant à la jeune génération toute branchée virtualité et analyses façon Experts .

Tout au long du récit, on réfléchit, on note, on observe, on compare, on s'égare aussi parfois pour mieux revenir au cœur sans perdre de vue la profondeur des émotions mais en aiguillant délicatement le lecteur sur de fausses pistes pour mieux le surprendre à la fin, enfin on sourit ou on pleure ...

et quand bien-même j'aurais fini la série entière, je la relirai avec grand plaisir ...que dis-je ? avec délectation !

Si pour certains lecteurs (trices), ce n'est pas assez moderne, s'il n'y a pas assez de détails sanglants, s'il n'y a pas assez d'actions ou de scènes torrides bien que les turpitudes amoureuses n'y soient pas ignorées...

Tant pis pour eux !!!

Moi cela me convient : vous l'aurez compris : JE SUIS FAN

Bev says

One morning Sophia Simeonidis, a Greek opera singer living in Paris, is startled to find a tree planted in her garden that wasn't there the night before. She has no idea where it came from or why....and it frightens her. Her husband isn't particularly interested and he certainly isn't afraid. She decides to approach her new neighbors and ask them to investigate for her. Her neighbors are three historians: Mathias, Marc, and Lucien--or the three evangelists as they are referred to by Armand Vandoosler (Marc's godfather & uncle). Vandoosler is an ex-cop and believes the three young men should help her out. The men dig up the tree to see if anything is buried there, but find nothing.

Not too long after Sophia disappears and her husband is once again unconcerned. He says that Sophia has often gone off alone and has no doubt that she'll soon be home. But time passes and Sophia's niece Alexandra arrives for a visit--insisting that it was planned and that there's no way her aunt would have taken a trip when Alexandra was expected. The three evangelists renew their investigations with the help of the godfather and his friend, a current policeman. The trail leads to a body in a burned-out car--a body beyond being identified, but a black stone--basalt--is found beside the body. A stone that served as a talisman for the missing singer and it looks like the trail has come to an end. Now all they have to do is figure out who murdered Sophia and why. Or is that really all?

The best part of *The Three Evangelists* by Fred Vargas for me has nothing to do with the mystery. Oh, that's good. It's well-plotted and allowed me to figure it out just before the denouement (which is the way I like it). But...the best part is the interaction of the three evangelists. I've given quite a few quotes below--but if I were to quote the sections I like with the three historians, I would be quoting huge chunks of the book. I love the mix of a pre-historian, a medievalist, and a World War I enthusiast. It's perfect. And I thoroughly enjoyed how the qualities of the historical scholars were put to use and managed to come to the correct solution.

The second best thing is the lyrical language of the translation from the French. Sian Reynold provides an English translation that keeps the flavor of the French language while making the story entirely accessible for English speakers. There are a couple of passages that somehow manage to come across as very British--but overall, a brilliant translation that is quite readable and enjoyable.

This is my first Fred Vargas Book. But it certainly won't be my last. Four stars.

This was first posted on my blog *My Reader's Block*. Please request permission before reposting. Thanks.

Quotes:

AV: Well, I see that everybody here goes prying into everyone else's affairs.

LD: You aren't a proper historian if you don't pry into people's affairs.

[Armand Vandoosler, Lucien Devernois; p. 38]

MV: ...those liberties may or may not come back to haunt him.

AV: As a rule they do.

[Marc Vandoosler, Armand Vandoosler; p. 39]

You see, Mathias, even if it might be more practical to have Lucien on the first floor, we can't mess about with chronology and disturb the layers set out by the staircase. The ladder of time is all we have left. [p. 59]

Frankly the idea of someone wanting revenge 20 years on seems pretty far-fetched to me. Life's too short, to nurse a grudge so long, you know what I mean? If everyone who'd ever been jilted plotted their revenge for years, we'd all be at each others' throats, wouldn't we? [Juliette, p. 65]

Meet my nephew, "St. Mark." The least little thing and he'll rewrite the gospel for you. [Armand Vandoosler; p. 115]

[Marc's] thoughts were in a whirl, clashing or diverging. Like the plates that move along on top of the hot heaving magma underneath the molten mantle of the earth. It's a scary thought, those plates sliding in all directions over the earth, unable to stay put. Tectonic plates they're called. Well, he was having tectonic thoughts. The thoughts were sliding about inside his head and sometimes, inevitably, clashed. With the usual sodding consequences. [p. 116]

Sophia was sorry she had missed the boat with reading. I told her that sometimes you read because you've missed some other boat. [Juliette; p. 127]

A policeman's strength lies either in a long monologue that crushes the opposition, or in a rapid response that kills it dead. You should never deprive a policeman of these well-rehearsed pleasures. Or he might turn nasty. [Armand Vandoosler; p. 133]

Once Mathias had gone, everyone fell silent. It was often like that living with Mathias, Marc reflected. When he was there, he hardly said anything and nobody took any notice of him. But when he left, it was as if the stone bridge they had all been standing on had suddenly disappeared and they had to find their balance again. [p. 142]

A; What do you expect from more time?

AV: Reactions. After a murder, nothing stands still. I'm waiting for reactions, even little ones. They will happen. One just has to be on the lookout for them.

[Alexandra, Armand Vandoolser; p. 143]

Being interrogated by detectives does not improve one's temper. [p. 152]

Alexandra was doing nothing. Well, nothing useful or profitable. She was sitting at a table, her head in her hands. She was thinking about tears, the tears that nobody sees, that nobody knows about, the tears shed in vain and unheeded. But which flow just the same. [p. 172]

Elisa says

Descrizione di un risveglio

Cosa fare se il blocco del lettore ti attanaglia? Prendi un noir. Prendi Fred Vargas. Affonda le chiappe nella poltrona, posiziona i piedi davanti al focolare e leggi.

L'elemento intrigante ti viene sbattuto in faccia dalla primissima battuta, ottima tattica per la pesca.

Avanzando, fioriscono i personaggi. Un po' stereotipati, ho letto in giro. Sì, non lo nego: sono personaggi stilizzati che vivono in un mondo stilizzato, creato da loro stessi. Tre storici, ognuno appassionato a un periodo diverso: Mathias, la preistoria; Marc, il medioevo; Lucien, la Grande Guerra. Tre coinquilini che affittano una topaia di quattro piani e ci si sistemano a strati, come sedimenti dimenticati dalla storia e dal suo strascico. I tre evangelisti: san Matteo, san Marco, san Luca.

Avanzando ancora, col giallo che ti viene sventolato costantemente sotto il naso, di fronte a personaggi che passano e non vengono notati sei tentato di sprofondare nuovamente nel tuo blocco del lettore. Impossibile scoprire l'assassino a metà libro, prima dei personaggi. E che diamine. Quando iniziano a scoprirlo il blocco ritorna, alza la voce, ti aspetta sulla soglia per intimorirti con il suo "torna con me".

Poi, all'ultimo, ti accorgi che non avevi capito niente. Un classico, io devo essere decisamente lenta, un perfetto allocco, preda appetibile dei giallisti. (Momento di autocommiserazione)

Le mie quattro stelline sono il risultato del puro godimento che ho tratto dalla lettura. Non è un libro particolarmente ben scritto, non è un giallo architettato in maniera avveniristica e non c'è attenzione per una caratterizzazione profonda dei personaggi. Ma non me ne importa niente: il mistero è aggrovigliato, e il nodo di cui è fatto somiglia tanto a quei deliziosi incroci tessuti da Daniel Pennac nella saga Malaussene. Nemmeno Pennac crea personaggi dalla forte caratterizzazione, anche Benjamin e Julie sono un po' la caricatura di loro stessi. Eppure ti entrano nel cuore. Come Marc coi suoi anelli e i suoi abiti neri, Mathias il taciturno, o Lucien l'incravattato, sempre pronto a dividere il mondo in trincee e fronti contrapposti. Quei tre evangelisti che osservano l'oggetto del mistero dalle loro finestre, come un gruppo di statue sul cocuzzolo di una chiesa.

In fondo era questo ciò che mi serviva: una buona storia, ricamata d'umorismo e di personaggi affabili seppelliti nella loro nerdosità. Una storia che continua in altri due romanzi: forse anche la Vargas si sentiva dispiaciuta nel separarsene.

E il blocco del lettore? C'è ancora, ma ha fatto un passo indietro e ha messo su un muso così con fare teatrale. Forse ci vorrà dell'altra Fred Vargas per convincerlo a non farsi più vedere.

Pat says

In una casa di quattro piani, nota nel quartiere come “topaia”, s’insediano Marc, Lucien e Mathias, tre storici squinternati e squattrinati. Armand Vandoosler, ex sbirro corrotto, zio e padrino di Marc li raggiunge. Una stamberga di quattro piani, un piano per ciascuno.

Sul fronte occidentale, nel giardino di Sophie, ex cantante lirica, una mattina compare un faggio. La donna si rivolge ai vicini per risolvere la “faccenda”. Poche settimane dopo la comparsa dell’albero Sophie sparisce. I tre “evangelisti”, chiamati dal vecchio Vandoosler san Matteo, san Marco e san Luca iniziano a indagare con l’aiuto dello zio.

Tanti misteri e qualche morto ammazzato. Dovrei rabbrivire e invece rido. Non sono depravata, non amo la violenza, non riesco a guardare film con spargimenti di sangue né leggere storie raccapriccianti. Il fatto è che a un certo punto i tre storici squinternati e lo zio sbirro canaglia hanno preso il sopravvento. E loro sono uno spasso.

Mi serviva qualcosa per alleggerire i “tomoni”. Ed ecco il gialletto fresco come la granita di limone che attenua la canicola estiva.

Sempre che non ci si faccia domande. Altrimenti la temperatura sale.

LJ says

First Sentence: ‘Pierre, something’s wrong with the garden,’ said Sophia.

Three young historians, Mathias, Marc and Lucian, and Marc’s ex-policeman uncle, Armand, buy a ramshackle house, known as the ‘disgrace’. When Armand sees the three young men standing each framed by a section of a gothic window, he coins them “the three evangelists.”

Their neighbor, Sophia, is an former opera singer. When she finds a tree has been planted in her garden, it causes her worry. She hires the young men to dig it up, just to reassure her that nothing is planted under it. When Sophia disappears, the young men, with the help of Armand, are determined to find out what happened.

I particularly like books which are character driven, and this certainly was. I loved the characters. Sophia, the retired opera singer worried about a tree which appears in her garden, the three evangelists, so named by Armand, an ex-flic and uncle to St. Mark (Marc the Middle Ages historian who always wears black), St. Martin (Mathias the Prehistoric historian who dislikes wearing clothes), and St. Luck (Lucian the Great Wars historian who always wears a tie). I felt Vargas really liked her characters and made me like them in turn.

Even the house, in which the four men live, almost becomes a character in the story. The story is wonderfully plotted, escalating bit-by-bit to the final climatic reveal. The reveal itself was particularly well done as it wasn't dry and unemotional, as most are, but filled with pain and disappointment.

Perhaps because she is Parisian and writing about her own city, there wasn't as strong a sense of place as I, a foreigner, might have liked. However, it is her familiarity with place that made me feel comfortable there as well.

This was one of the better translations. The dialogue worked very well, particularly the occasional banter between the principal characters.

Vargas' writing captivates me. It is filled with warmth, humor and emotion. I highly recommend it.

THE THREE EVANGELISTS (Ama. Sleu-3 historians and godfather-Paris-Cont) – VG+
Vargas, Fred – standalone
Vintage, 2006, UK paperback – ISBN: 9780099469551

Delphine says

Fred Vargas is probably the best detective fiction writer EVER. Her world is poetic, her characters are charming. Her novels are neither gory nor cosy. A must-read.

The three evangelists are particularly interesting: all three of them are historians, living in the same house: one is a specialist of prehistory, one of Medieval times and the last of WWI. They are quite hilarious.

Katia says

Un albero. Uno storico del Medioevo, uno della Preistoria, uno della Grande Guerra. Un ex poliziotto. Questi sono gli ingredienti per un romanzo giallo che ti porta a pensare di aver trovato il colpevole, ma subito dopo cambiano le carte in tavola, e ancora, e ancora...

Vargas non si perde in chiacchiere. La narrazione è incentrata sui fatti. Non ci sono digressioni o futili dettagli. Inizialmente è un pò difficile entrare nello stile della scrittrice e comprendere i personaggi, soprattutto se, come me, siete abituati ai gialli della Christie! Ma Vargas non delude. La sua penna ti regala le emozioni e i turbamenti che solo un vero giallo riesce a dare. Cinque stelle meritate!

Calpurnia says

Me lo he pasado muy bien leyendo este libro, sí. Por supuesto sigo con la serie.

Jil says

Another book partly ruined by the excessive enthusiasm of my French professor -- analyzing a plane book, a fairly typical mystery, as if it were grand literature, is a deeply frustrating endeavor. Still, I recognize the good in this book: it's much funnier than the average mystery, its characters atypical and quite amusing.

The mystery itself is hardly compelling (I could very easily put this one down), and the juicy twists and turns reveal themselves in just a few pages at the end, which means that the rest of the book sort of feels like filler, but that's the nature of many mysteries, I suppose.

Jokoloyo says

[. Love the scenes when Matthias and Marc helping drunk Lucien (hide spoiler)]

Julie says

[

I was rather indecisive about the manner in which the murder was commi

Marina says

Three historians turned sleuths, helped by an uncle ex policeman do the honours of solving the crime in this one. The plot never stopped being a little silly, but it was great fun to read and I'll look for the other books in the series.
