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In the New York Times Book Review, Janet Kaye wrote that the book "both disturbs and amuses." A Kirkus Reviews critic noted that the book displays "psychological astuteness and considerable craftsmanship." Fear and Trembling describes the narrator's job with a traditional Japanese import-export firm, and her culture shock as she is progressively demoted as punishment for her ignorance, until she ends up as a lavatory attendant. - Return to top of the page - ©1999-2021 the complete review Main | the Rest | Review Index | Links © 1996-2014, Amazon.com, Inc. She was surprised by this success, and told Leonard: "I was convinced it would sell seven copies maximum, ten if my aunts bought it."In Loving Sabotage Nothomb tells the story of non-Chinese children whose parents worked in Peking in the 1970s. By order of the Captain there are, indeed, no mirrors to be seen anywhere on the island, indeed nothing that reflects much of anything -- all so Hazel does not have to see her own reflection. In Time International, a writer summed up her style as "straightforward," noting: "Nothomb's variously themed novels all revolve around weird worlds and characters representing the often hostile and grotesque natures lurking beneath real life." The critic commented that although Nothomb's novels have won critical attention, "her bizarre personality has made her a pop culture star." Nothomb, who has suffered from anorexia, told the writer that she likes rotting fruits and vegetables, and that each day she drinks large quantities of strong black tea, which forces her to vomit periodically. In particular Nothomb makes Hazel an interesting and somewhat ambiguous victim.

An unusual twist is that Nothomb offers two very different endings. Elena is more interested in a little boy named Fabrice. Et une invitation au plaisir." - Jean-Pierre Tison, Lire "Anstelle einer Analyse der Mechanismen von Macht und Ohnmacht liefert Nothomb Seelengequatsche." - Martin Amanshauser, Der Standard Please note that these ratings solely represent the complete review's biased interpretation and subjective opinion of the actual reviews and do not claim to accurately reflect or represent the views of the reviewers. Trying to meet all your book preview and review needs. We certainly approve of Nothomb's form of provoking thought, well done as usual. 80; March 15, 2002, review of The Character of Rain, p. W8.WWD, October 7, 2002, Chantal Goupil, "The Write Stuff," biography of Amélie Nothomb, p. But Nothomb offers enough ideas, fast and fairly clever dialogue, and plot to keep one entertained. 26.ONLINEBelgium Federal Portal, (May 8, 2006), biography of Amélie Nothomb. Contemporary Women Writing in French Web site, (May 8, 2006), biography of Amélie Nothomb offers enough ideas, fast and fairly clever dialogue, and plot to keep one entertained. 26.ONLINEBelgium Federal Portal, (May 8, 2006), biography of Amélie Nothomb. Amélie Nothomb. A Kirkus Reviews contributor called the book "witty and original." The protagonist of The Book of Proper Names is a young girl named Plectrude whose mother, Lucette, selected her name from a reference book, hoping that it would have talismanic qualities of protection for her child. Une absolution pour les ruses du désir. She then attended Brussels University before returning to Tokyo, where she worked as an interpreter. She finishes the book off, then adds an alternate ending, trying to have it both ways. 619; April, 1998, Yolande Helm, review of Péplum, p. It is an unusual trick, and not entirely satisfactory (and if two endings, why not ten?).

There are little morals throughout the books, and though the Captain is somewhat simplistically painted (the devious, all-knowing, obsessed madman), Nothomb avoids making everything black and white. Hazel's relationship with the Captain is decidedly unhealthy, and Françoise slowly learns more about the bizarre goings-on on the island. Now approaching her twentythird birthday, Hazel has fallen slightly ill and needs some medical attention. In Library Journal Lisa Rohrbaugh described the book as "an utterly charming, humorous tale of East meets West."In a profile of Nothomb in WWD, Chantal Goupil commented that Nothomb in WWD, Chantal Goupil commented tha and naively elegant. 51; October 5, 2000, review of Loving Sabotage, p. As usual, the book is heavy on dialogue, and most of it is quite clever and reveals the characters well. Please note and consider that this review of Fear and Trembling, p. 1117; July, 2004, Jennifer Mattson, review of The Book of Proper Names, p. (That is only part of the title-reference, however.)

It is an atmospheric little novel, and Nothomb's plot-turns are interesting enough. Among the realizations achieved from this new awareness was the knowledge that her days of being lavishly attended to would eventually end. The nurse tries to get Hazel to see herself in her true light, but she is thwarted by the Captain at every turn. Mercure - Canada . 38. French Reviews. "Propulsée à chaque livraison en tête des listes des meilleures ventes, Amélie Nothomb fonce. A nurse, Françoise Chavaigne is summoned, to take care of the island's other noteworthy inhabitant, the Captain's young ward, Hazel Englert. Education: Brussels University, graduated, 1988; also attended the Free University of Brussels. ADDRESSES: Agent—c/o Author Mail, Editions Albin Michel, 22 rue Huyghens, 75014, Paris, France.CAREER: Writer and novelist. Contents: Main the Best the Rest Review Index Links to e-mail us: the complete review - fiction Mercure by Amélie Nothomb Genre: Novel Written: 1998 Length: 226 pages Original in: French Availability: Mercure - France . She also uncovers an old obsession of the Captain's, another young woman that the Captain hid away, but who killed herself. Nothomb is the author of several novels. The story goes on to describe how children, instead of becoming allies, form groups and fight against each other: the narrator and her allies first fight the East German children, then the Nepalese children of other diplomats. The Stranger Next Door features Emile Hazel, a high-school Greek and Latin teacher who retires at age sixty-five. - Return to top of the page - The complete review's Review:

In Mercure Nothomb again works with a small set of characters, drawn and forced together in somewhat unusual circumstances. The author told Dick Leonard in Europe: "I estimate that I write about 3.7 novels are short, "easy to read," and witty, "many of her characters are deeply unpleasant, and she has a special fascination for obesity and for eating disorders, of which she has had personal experience. "Nothomb's first published novel, Hygiène de l'assassin, appeared in 1992 and was so successful that it sold one hundred thousand copies, was adapted as a play and an opera, and was translated into several languages. 368. Library Journal, October 15, 1997, Francisco Goldsmith, review of The Stranger Next Door, p. The setting (the twenties) is a bit odd, but otherwise the elements are there. He and his wife of forty-three years, Juliette, retire to the French countryside, but their blissful solitude and togetherness is interrupted by constant visits from their only neighbor, an intrusive doctor. The novel is set, almost entirely, in 1923 and on a small, isolated island, owned by the mysterious old Capitaine, Omer Loncours. However, when she enters the rigorous Paris Opera Ballet School at age thirteen, the harsh academic program, and blurred meanings of those things she once took for granted. 59; January 15, 2001, review of Fear and Trembling, p. 170. Time International, January 1, 2001, "Amélie Nothomb: 33, Belgian Author," p. Hazel lost both her parents during the war, in a dreadful attack in which she was apparently horribly disfigured. 1819. Europe, March, 2000, Dick Leonard, "Nothomb Builds an Audience," p. Nothomb builds up the story nicely, as Françoise gets drawn closer into this strange circle. Nevertheless, each ending is quite well done, the second being perhaps the better. As she grew, Plectrude's life seemed to have the almost fairy tale-like quality that her mother had hoped for, with the young girl maturing into a dancer possessing considerable talent. Certainly it does not serve to help Lucette, as she killed Plectrude's father before the baby was born and committed suicide shortly after the child's birth. In particular, Nothomb "maintains a sense of humor and irony that are rare in current French literature." In The Character of Rain Nothomb creates just such a work in her fictionalized autobiography from birth to age five. Although the visits anger Emile, he is too polite to tell the doctor not to visit. 22; March 25, 2001, Susan Chira, "Lost in Translation," p. The unnamed narrator begins describing her life at age seven, when she fell in love with a seven-year-old Italian girl, Elena, who does not return her affection. 52; July 5, 2004, review of The Book of Proper Names, p. Although Bernadette is repulsive, Emile and Juliette feel sorry for the lenses might have allowed for some reflection.) Françoise befriends Hazel -- who is, in any case, more in need of friendship than medical attention. Similarly the illustrative quotes chosen here are merely those the complete review subjectively believes represent the tenor and judgment of the review as a whole. An entertaining little read, Mercure is nothing special. Author's works have been translated into fourteen languages. ADAPTATIONS: Hygiène de l'assassin was adapted for a French and Japanese-language film, written and directed by Alain Corneau, for Cinema Guild; Le Sabotage amoureux is scheduled to be adapted to film in 2007.SIDELIGHTS: The daughter of a Belgian diplomat, Amélie Nothomb was born in Kobe, Japan, spending her early life in Japan and also China, New York City, Bangladesh, Laos, and Burma. 20.Publishers Weekly, October 27, 1997, review of The Stranger Next Door, p. Quecksilber - Deutschland Mercurio - Italia - Return to top of the page - Our Assessment: B: enjoyable little story See our review for fuller assessment. Strict rules are set for Françoise when she comes to the island, the most notable being that she is not allowed to bring a mirror. With moderate success. 94; February 1, 2001, Lisa Rohrbaugh, review of Fear and Trembling, p. Emile and his wife, curious to see who would marry this odd and annoying man, invite the doctor and his wife, Bernadette, for dinner. We acknowledge (and remind and warn you) that they may, in fact, be entirely unrepresentative of the actual reviews by any other measure. A Publishers Weekly reviewer commented favorably on the novel's "charmingly concise prose," and Booklist reviewer Jennifer Mattson named it a "mind-blowing little fable." BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL SOURCES: PERIODICALS amènent Amélie ferait mieux de s'arrêter devant un miroir et de réfléchir." - Thierry Gandillot, L'Express "Tant de vaniteuses et agressives coquetteries amènent Amélie à sacrifier ses intrigues à son ego et ses dialogues improbables à des minauderies, dans de longues et vaines digressions: son affaire de Mercure, elle eût pu la boucler en une nouvelle." - Pierre Marcelle, Libération "Ce conte fantastique - à double issue - est un plaidoyer pour ceux et celles que la beauté rend fous. Bram Stoker, Nerval, Swift, Honoré d'Urfé -- and "les contes élisabéthains de lady Amelia Northumb" -- are cited and read, and it is particularly in the vein of Le Fanu that Nothomb tries to write her tale. She describes how her earliest days were involved merely with the basic functions of living, but relates how a taste for chocolate allowed her consciousness to develop and her awareness to expand. ALiterary Saloon&Site of Review, Perbleu! It's Them Again!," p. Review Summaries Source Rating Date Reviewer L'Express B- 17/9/1998 Thierry Gandillot Libération C 17/9/1998 Pierre Marcelle Lire . She goes so far as to purchase thermometers, breaking them for the mercury in which Hazel might glimpse her true reflection. - Return to top of the page - Links: Mercure: Le Livre de Poche publicity page Diogenes Verlag publicity page (German) Reviews: Lire (French) Leselust (German) Amelie Nothomb: Other books by Amélie Nothomb under review: Belgian author Amélie Nothomb was born in Kobe, Japan, August 13, 1967. Possibly, however, Nothomb felt that she could only use that colder one if she had first made for a happy ending. 39.Review of Contemporary Fiction, summer, 2001, Alan Tinkler, review of Loving Sabotage, p. or its affiliates PERSONAL: Born August 13, 1967, in Kobe, Japan; daughter of Patrick (a Belgian ambassador) and Daniéle (Scheyven) Nothomb; married. Letts, review of Les Catilinaires, p. 100.Wall Street Journal, March 16, 2001, Merle Rubin, review of Fear and Trembling, p. During early career, worked as a translator in Japan.AWARDS, HONORS: Grand Prix du roman, French Academy, 1999, for Stupeur et tremblement; Prix Littéraire de la Vocation (Paris, France) and Prix Alain Fournier (Brussels), both for Hygiène de l'assassin. WRITINGS: Hygienène de l'assassin, Albin Michel (Paris, France), 1992. Le Sabotage amoureux, Albin Michel (Paris, France), 1994. Les Catilinaires, Albin Michel (Paris, France), 1995, translated by Carol Volk as The Stranger Next Door, Henry Holt (New York, NY), 1998. Feblum, Albin Michel (Paris, France), 1995. Attentat, Albin Michel (Paris, France), 1996. Attentat, Albin Michel (Paris, France), 1997. Mercure, 1997. Mercure, Albin Michel (Paris, France), 1997. Mercure, 1997. Mercu Trembling, St. Martin's (New York, NY), 2001. Metaphysique des tubes, Albin Michel (Paris, France), 2000, translated by Shaun Whiteside as The Book of Proper Names, St. Martin's (New York, NY), 2004. Antechrista (novel), Albin Michel (Paris, France), 2005. Biographie de la faim, Albin Michel (Paris, France), 2004. Acide Sulfurique (novel), Albin Michel (Paris, France), 2005. Contributor to books, including En quiête du livre: vers une bibliothéque idéal, Editions Paroles d'Aube, 1997. Recommended as a quick, fun -- and somewhat haunting -- read.

