

Submission

In a near-future France, Francois, a middle-aged academic, is watching his life slowly dwindle to nothing. His sex drive is diminished, his parents are dead, and his lifelong obsession - the ideas and works of the nineteenth-century novelist and pessimist Joris-Karl Huysmans - has led him nowhere. In a late-capitalist society where consumerism has become the new religion, Francois is spiritually barren, but seeking to fill the vacuum of his existence with something. And he is not alone. As the 2022 Presidential election approaches, two candidates emerge as favourites: Marine Le Pen of the Front National, and Muhammed Ben Abbes of the nascent Muslim Fraternity. Forming a controversial alliance with the mainstream parties, Ben Abbes sweeps to power, and overnight the country is transformed. Islamic law comes into force: women are veiled, polygamy is encouraged and, for Francois, life is set on a new course. *Submission* is both a devastating satire and a profound and painfully sharp meditation on isolation, faith and love. It is a startling new work by one of the most provocative and prescient novelists of today.

Review

"A work of real literary distinction...[Houellebecq] has been the novelist who has most fearlessly and presciently tackled the rise of Islamic extremism in recent years...He is a writer with a gift for telling the truth, unlike any other in our time – I've been consistently saying he is the writer who matters most to me for many years now. I've read *Submission* twice in the last week with ever growing admiration and enjoyment. There's been no English-language novel this good lately. With *Submission* Houellebecq has inserted himself right into the centre of the intellectual debate that was already raging in France about Islam and identity politics...There is nobody else writing now more worth reading." (David Sexton *Evening Standard*)

"One cannot be said to be keeping abreast of contemporary literature without reading his work." (Karl Ove Knausgaard *New York Times*)

"The narration is enjoyably sardonic, a pungent mixture of deadpan jokes about sexual politics and close reading...Darkly clever and funny." (*Guardian*)

"A fine, deeply literary work...It is genuinely more admiring than critical of Islam...It's electrifying; no recent English-language novel compares." (*Spectator*)

"Houellebecq's placid dystopias have been among the only contemporary novels worth dropping things for – and this is arguably the best of the lot... **a bleakly funny satire on submission and salvation...I can't think of another contemporary writer who bares their soul so fearlessly – or with such rewards.**" (*Evening Standard*)

"Witty and deft...The polemical power of his imagination...approaches that of two 20th-century masterpieces, *Nineteen Eighty Four* and *Brave New World*...This is an important novel...It's worth remembering that Houellebecq has form in demonstrating that life sometimes imitates art." (*Financial Times*)

"Houellebecq's latest, *Submission*, brings his project to its most accessible realization yet. What's

the project? Jerking your chain at the highest possible level, which a lot of people can sense from the vibe around Houellebecq, and therefore pre-emptively avoid. You shouldn't. **The free and wild play of his hatred for modernity and its usual self-flattering reassurances is a tonic to be relished.** Houellebecq's respect for his avowed models – Lovecraft, and here, Huysmans, reveals a sturdy commitment to older narrative forms, even genres – he's a horror writer, here updating the 'Deal-with-the-devil' tale. Lorin Stein's relaxed translation catches how Houellebecq's insouciant revulsion for propriety, and his congenital self-loathing, trickles down into a vernacular full of tiny slippages in and out of bourgeois formality, somewhat akin to Inspector Clouseau trying to recapture his authoritativeness after a pratfall. In the past these have read as errors of tone, but in *Submission*, they're as funny as I think Houellebecq intends." (Jonathan Lethem)

"No question about the book of the year: it's Michel Houellebecq's Submission in Lorin Stein's fluent translation...Following its publication, the Guardian asked brightly: 'Does Houellebecq really hate women and Muslims, or is he just a twisted provocateur?' But the book is more nuanced and more troubling than that. The narrator doesn't register women who aren't young and shaggable – tell me that's not how men see women – and in this story, it's libidinous intellectuals who succumb to the new order because it suits them. Plausible? Sort of. Worrying? Yep. Important? Very." (Melanie McDonagh *Spectator, Books of the Year*)

"*Submission* is both a more subtle and less immediately scandalous satire than the brouhaha surrounding it might suggest...All described with lashings of Houellebecq's characteristically phosphorescent bile...That we feel Houellebecq's satire (like all the best from Swift to Céline to Waugh) is only half in jest makes reading *Submission* a shifty, discomfiting affair: we're never sure quite how many steps ahead of us the author is; how much of the nastiness is meant and how much mere *drôlerie*; how many levels lie beneath, just waiting to suck us down from our moral high ground." (*Observer*)

"It is a fascinating and disturbing vision of a society which becomes an accidental theocracy... **A rather brilliant conceit, worthy of George Orwell**...*Submission* is a **fascinating and original dystopia – challenging and ambiguous**. It is a vision of what could happen if the West finally abandoned liberal enlightenment values and fell into the arms of religion." (*Herald*)

"Houellebecq has **an unerring, Balzacian flair for detail**, and his novels provide **an acute, disenchanting anatomy of French middle-class life** ... Houellebecq writes about Islam with curiosity, fascination, even a hint of envy." (*London Review of Books*)

"There are **echoes of Albert Camus's** outsider, Meursault, in François' lack of emotion and relentless cynicism...*Submission*, expertly translated by Lorin Stein, can be read on a number of levels. As much as it is about Islamic and political tensions in France, Houellebecq also explores the inner world of his chauvinistic antihero who struggles to find meaning in his life and seeks solace in sex." (*Independent on Sunday*)

"Michel Houellebecq's *Submission* is many things: **comic, profound, and at times unexpectedly moving**. It is much more about human nature than Islam, and to think otherwise is to misunderstand it. Of the several suicide notes for the west Houellebecq has written, this is his

best." (Richard Flanagan *Observer*)

"Extraordinary... if there is anyone in literature today, not just in French but worldwide, who is thinking about the sort of enormous shifts we all feel are happening, it's him." (Emmanuel Carrère *Le Monde*)

From the Inside Flap

In a near-future France, François, a middle-aged academic, is watching his life slowly dwindle to nothing. His sex drive is diminished, his parents are dead, and his lifelong obsession - the ideas and works of the nineteenth-century novelist and pessimist Joris-Karl Huysmans - has led him nowhere. In a late-capitalist society where consumerism has become the new religion, François is spiritually barren, but seeking to fill the vacuum of his existence with something.

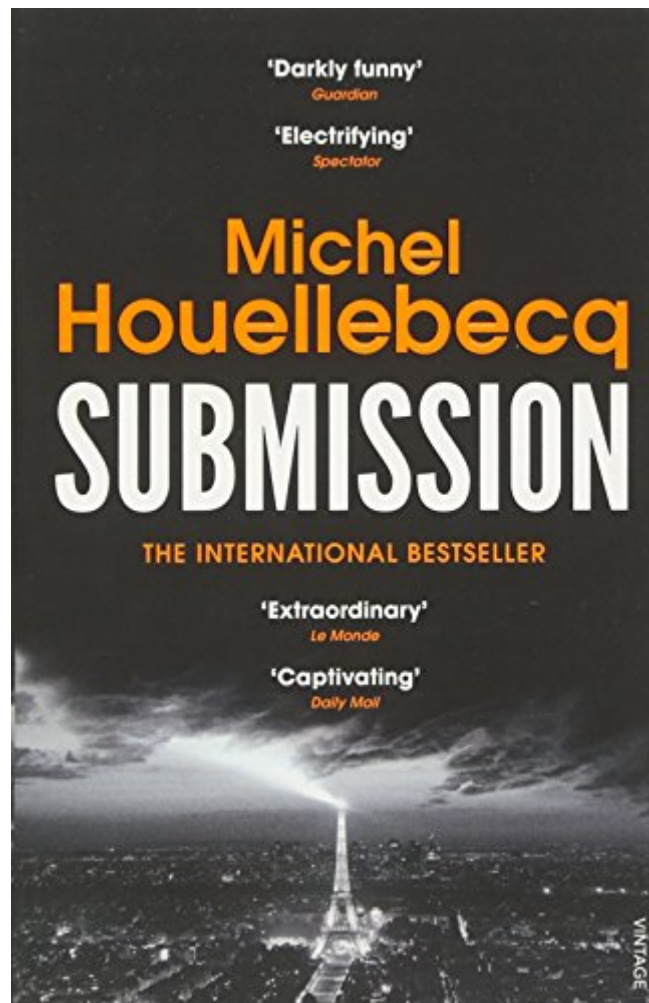
And he is not alone. As the 2022 Presidential election approaches, two candidates emerge as favourites: Marine Le Pen of the Front National, and Muhammed Ben Abbas of the nascent Muslim Fraternity. Forming a controversial alliance with the mainstream parties, Ben Abbas sweeps to power, and overnight the country is transformed. Islamic law comes into force: women are veiled, polygamy is encouraged and, for François, life is set on a new course.

Submission is both a devastating satire and a profound and painfully sharp meditation on isolation, faith and love. It is a startling new work by one of the most provocative and prescient novelists of today.

A poet, essayist and novelist, Michel Houellebecq is the author of several novels, including *The Map and the Territory*, *Atomised*, *Platform* and *Whatever*.

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Beerdigungen

Nachname: Hochmeister Vorname: Aloisia Verstorben am:: 2. Februar 2018, Freitag Beerdigung am:: 16. Februar 2018, Freitag 14:00 Friedhof: Großengersdorf

submission

submission - Translation to Spanish, pronunciation, and forum discussions

Why Michel Houellebecq's "Submission" Is The Most ...

The charge laid against Submission is of course that it is Islamophobic. But is it? An English translation won't be available until late summer, but ...