

The useless "mea culpa" of the "porn star" Houellebecq

The novelist publishes "A few months in his life", a disclaimer for his criticism of Islam and its inclusion in a porn film; but it doesn't turn out well



▲The French writer Michel Houellebecq EFE

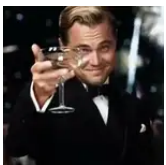
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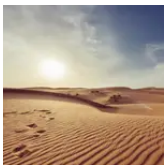
The work "A few months in my life", by Houellebecq, plunges into the author's darkness and mourning without seeking any rehabilitation . The book relates his personal experience from October 2022 to March 2023, after his acquittal before the Amsterdam court on March 28. In that month, the eternal "enfant terrible" of French letters lost the case against Stefan Ruitenbeek and the Kirac collective. With depression and a very bad temper, as a true Castilian would say, he completed this text on April 16. Soon, despite himself, a pornographic film starring the author will be released, so in these pages what he tries to do is balance his desperate situation (we estimate hopelessly) and defend himself with the fiercest revenge engine he possesses: his pen .. Dear and admired author: it is worth remembering that the world becomes lighter without the burden of always being right.

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In the book, Houellebecq plunges his soul into darkness as he recounts his recent odyssey from October 2022 to March 2023. In this work, the provocative writer

shares his personal vision of a traumatic experience as an actor in the controversial film "Kirac 27." **He had applied to ban the release of the film, but his demand was initially rejected by a Dutch court..** However, after appealing, he obtained legal permission to see the film before its theatrical release. This authorization allowed him to evaluate his performance on screen and to negotiate possible modifications with the Kirac artistic collective, who had invited him as a leading figure in the project. The famous author, 67 years old and quite involved in controversial issues, claims to have experienced something similar to the victims of a rape (unforgivable, when there was legality involved and nobody forced anyone). But he admits his clumsiness for not having paid attention to a clause in the contract that allowed the director to use scenes shot with a porn actress on social networks.

Houellebecq feels like a victim of Dutch filmmaker Stefan Ruitenbeek, also known as La Cucaracha, and of his own naivety. Throughout 120 pages, he recounts the six months that he lived as a calamitous moment, both for his reputation and for

his mental health (more questions on the part of this writer). In the film's trailer, the well-known author appears shirtless kissing a young woman on a bed, which he considers detrimental to his image and feels that he was portrayed as a porn star (what did he imagine he was doing?). Houellebecq has racked up erratic acts and media disasters in recent months, from his comments about Muslims to his involvement in this amazing shoot. **How are we to interpret his confused admissions of naivete? Is she fusing and confusing herself with any of her characters? Didn't she like seeing herself next to Van Rooijen, known as La Cerda, Isa Moleman, alias El Pavo, Mrs. Ruitenbeek, nicknamed La Vibora, and Mrs. Houellebecq, as Lisis?** Let's not forget that the "underground" filmmaker would have proposed a script based on influential visual elements while Houellebecq would have written: HP Lovecraft. Against the world, against life. Be that as it may, the Frenchman found himself involved in two situations that he considers stupid: one, when he criticized Muslims in an interview with Michel Onfray for the magazine "Front Populaire", which earned him a threat to file a complaint by the rector of the Paris Mosque, and the second when he claims to have been manipulated into participating in an erotic film with his wife, whose terms of the contract were not respected (I insist: we readers would like to see it) and that they violated the privacy of the author and his woman. Houellebecq acknowledges his naivety (is the author naive?) in thinking that he could control his image, especially when it comes to pornographic content and if the person concerned is famous. In "Le Figaro", he humbly recognized his great stupidity.

It is known that Houellebecq is the king of French letters and that this gives him privileges . However, this does not imply that we can be interested in his privacy. The literary question lies in the place where the writing is found. In "The map and the territory", the writer showed the difference between the map, as an objective element, and the territory, as a physical and emotional reality, potentially imaginary. In this case, what is interesting is not his ordinary life, but what he creates from it. The moral of the story is that meat is sad and novelists are men like other men, except when they write books. And what about this one? **It's an autodiary, not even an autofiction.** Pages are read and forgotten just as quickly. This personal reflection has, however, the merit of honesty. Houellebecq does not deceive. Even when he uses metaphors, he talks about how he feels. It's like a "reality show." However, there is a legal issue. Article 1.4 of the contract he signed, transcribed in full in the book, states: "This permission applies to all content, sequences, recordings and images representing the participant created and/or obtained by Stefan and his team in a period from November 1, 2022 to December

31, 2023." An explicit video with Houellebecq on social networks would have had the same effects. The fact that they filmed his antics is what he should have avoided. Yes friend. You should have avoided it.

"A few months in my life" **sounds more like a confession in search of our absolute than an analytical text.** It must be admitted that he expresses his words about these facts and places them in a perspective that allows him to distance himself (he knows how to do it well). The author, who has often portrayed raw and instrumentalized sex in his works, is confronted with a system of which he had not planned to fall victim. In an interview with Augustin Trapenard, he even confessed that he is currently unhappy and also suffers from a loss of sexual desire... Wow! I'm sorry, but do we really care how his libido is? His decline in intelligence and culture is met with exacerbated sensitivity. He is a first grader and perfectly masters the art of understatement. He's not lying, or at least he hopes so. If we smile when reading certain formulations, Houellebecq is still Houellebecq after all. Although his reflections on euthanasia and surrogacy are interesting, this

little book seems to be a rescue attempt, an operation to save his reputation. In other words, a loophole. And in Roman paladin: something that interests little, very little or nothing. I'm sorry, teacher: it's a wrong work.

- ▲ **The best:** That Houellebecq's prose is always clean and pure no matter what he writes.
- ▼ **The worst:** It is a failed work, a revengeful text that tries to justify the unjustifiable.

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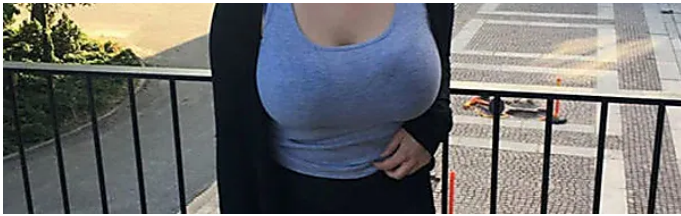
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