



Le Roi des Aulnes

Michel Tournier

Download now

Read Online →

Le Roi des Aulnes

Michel Tournier

Le Roi des Aulnes Michel Tournier

An international bestseller and winner of the Prix Goncourt, France's most prestigious literary award, *The Ogre* is a masterful tale of innocence, perversion, and obsession. It follows the passage of strange, gentle Abel Tiffauges from submissive schoolboy to "ogre" of the Nazi school at the castle of Kaltenborn, taking us deeper into the dark heart of fascism than any novel since *The Tin Drum*. Until the very last page, when Abel meets his mystic fate in the collapsing ruins of the Third Reich, it shocks us, dazzles us, and above all holds us spellbound.

Le Roi des Aulnes Details

Date : Published September 1st 1996 by Gallimard Education (first published 1970)

ISBN : 9782070393886

Author : Michel Tournier

Format : Paperback 576 pages

Genre : Fiction, Cultural, France

 [Download Le Roi des Aulnes ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Le Roi des Aulnes ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Le Roi des Aulnes Michel Tournier

From Reader Review *Le Roi des Aulnes* for online ebook

Czarny Pies says

Michel Tournier's *Der Erlekonig* (a.k.a. *The Ogre*, a.k.a. *Le roi des aulnes*) accomplishes the remarkable feat of making the reader feel even queasier than does the poem by Goethe from which it takes its name.

I still recall reading Goethe's poem in my last year of High School surrounded by old friends. The *Erlekonig* is the ogre of the alders lurking in the trees waiting to grab and kill children. In Goethe's poem a child is riding with his father who is driving his horse at a furious gallop hoping to reach home before the dreaded *Erlkonig* takes the child. Alas it is not to be. The boy dies in the last stanza leaving my friends and I in the class horrified. Goethe indeed created a masterpiece of terror.

Tournier's version of the tale is even more unsettling to the reader. His protagonist is a socially awkward, automobile mechanic who seems to be of rather sub-par intelligence. His name is Able Tiffauges (which is the name of the property of Gilles de Rais the supposed historical model for Blue-Beard). Tiffauges unlike most Catholic men who are instructed follow in the footsteps of St. Joseph, Tiffauges Saint Christopher as his role model. His great dream is to be a porter of male children. At this point, the reader becomes quite worried, sensing that Tiffauges is a very strange person who could quickly develop into a predatory paedophile. What happens is indeed quite horrible.

Tiffauges enrolls in the French army during WWII, is taken prisoner, changes sides and is transferred to the Eastern Front. He is assigned the job of kidnapping Lithuanian boys to be trained as soldiers to be used against the rapidly advancing Russian army. The dimwitted Tiffauges initially believes that the boys are being trained for an elite officers corps. When he realizes the truth, it is of course too late. Tiffauges tries to redeem himself by saving one of the boys from being killed. He picks a particularly nice Jewish lad and flees. Tiffauges and the boy are soon caught. Tiffauges is killed.

(In the view of some, the author leaves the issue of the boy's survival open although from my view the text suggest that the boy dies as well. The other opinion would have to be based on an interview with the author or some other statement outside of the book itself.)

However the last page is interpreted *Der Erlekonig* is a profoundly unsettling book. The reader feels ill from the experience of having spent so much time inside the unhealthy mind of Tiffauges. Nonetheless, Tournier's novel is a tour de force. He convinces us that the child-eating ogre of the alders is indeed a reality in our unhappy world.

Szplug says

At a high point in a pivotal relationship formed during his refectory days in an alien French boy's school, Abel Tiffauges is told the gruesome apocryphal story of the Baron des Adrets' newfound awareness of *cadent euphoria* by the obese enigma Nestor. The crescendo is reached when the latter murmurs in coda that "*There's probably nothing more moving in a man's life than the accidental discovery of his own perversion.*" Just how much truth this observation bore is revealed to Abel many years later, when he has mutated from a bunched-up, undersized boy into a hulking giant of a man: bearing a wounded child in his massive arms, he is lapped by beatific paroxysms of *phoric* joy, much akin to that experienced by a pair of historic personages:

St. Christopher when he similarly performed as steed for a riverine Christ, and Alfonso d'Albuquerque, a conquistador in peril of death at the hands of the boundless sea, who perched a lad atop his shoulders in the desperate hope that the youth's innocence would serve to cleanse him of sin and turn the eye of God toward him in a favorable light. Would that there were enough innocence to mount and shrive the twentieth-century, an epoch when perversion, obsession, and desire freed themselves from all restraints and ran amok amid a continent watered with blood.

The Ogre is a beautifully strange novel, alternately narrated by and about the remarkable Abel Tiffauges—a Frenchman so unlike his countrymen, a gentle giant who firmly believes himself an eternal and potent natural force, primordial in origin, descended across the mists of time from the original *Abel*, the nomad brother of the sedentary *Cain* who—in a pattern to be repeated *ad nauseam* throughout history's pages—was murdered by his sibling for his hateful and peregrine individuality. Tiffauges interacts with the material world only in a routine and perfunctory manner, quietly going about his solitary business while experiencing a rich and eccentric inner life, in which systems and symbols, portents and preordained fates illuminate every event in their explicatory light. Even as the apocalypse of the Second World War thunders down upon Europe and Tiffauges is swept from a Parisian suburban garage to Teutonic castles amidst the marshy forests and plains of East Prussia, he is central to this avenging maelstrom, a locus for the melancholy loam of Prussian nature, yet completely apart from it—a separate entity to the daily suffering and slaughter that plays out around him. Finding in the war the means to pursue his child-focussed obsessions, Abel calmly sets about a *phoric* existence, luxuriating in its anarchic bliss until the *diabolical inversion* that always threatens the innocent poisons the roots of all his fantasies.

Michel Tournier has penned a marvel here, a haunting, quirky story that lingers in the mind like a disturbing dream. The fascinating symbolism and ego-mythology of Abel's unique and contentedly lonely mind, after having spread to saturate every event and path of the story, are swiftly drawn back in a taut synthesis for the perfectly realized final pages. The dialectic between *innocence* as a guileless love of being, of man, of life, and its malignant inversion *purity*, a satanic hatred of all that innocence cherishes, holds place of primacy, along with those of freshness versus corruption, chaste desire against lust, and the boundaries of amorality. Abel imagines himself an innocent—but why then his need to be anointed by that of a child? Abel's immense capacity for sacrifice and compassion exist right alongside his utter indifference to the suffering of the majority of humanity who don't conform to his ideals; the children he so gently carries have been cruelly ripped from the arms of their parents, and a mother's tears move him no more than the death throes of the Third Reich. Unrealized guilt yet contains the potentiality for redemption that is immanent in culpability. Not until the horrific joke played out by the malignant streams of fate is revealed to him, in all the fullness of its macabre glory, does Abel finally understand the price of *phoria* and truly behold the Erl-King's sovereignty, the inescapable fate in store for the Ogre, whether in the pellucid realm of fairy-tale or the grim theatre of reality.

Kkneen says

Hailed as the greatest living French writer, Tournier's dark but amazing novel chronicles the life of a French citizen Abel Tiffauges, whose childhood obsession with an adolescent boy echoes throughout his life as a mechanic, a pigeon fancier and a soldier in Alsace. It is a book about the darkest sides of our natures and spans several countries and decades ending in Prussia during Hitler's reign. This book won the coveted Prix Goncourt – the French Booker Prize.

BEST BOOK I HAVE READ IN YEARS

Tyler says

At the end of this story one mystery lingers: Did something magical happen? "If you answer yes," the book seems to say, "humans are inescapably haunted. If you answer no, people may be safe, but the cost will come elsewhere." Either way I now see clearly why Prussia suddenly vanished.

What instigates the mystery is the protagonist. Abel Tiffauge is a fairly normal French guy despite thinking of himself as an "ogre" with his over-muscled shoulders. But what's normal is relative. Who among us hasn't experienced this: You're listening to someone you've known just a little while. Every sentence he utters makes perfect sense, but you gradually realize that the more he talks, the crazier he sounds. Some strange force subverts the logic of his discourse, and you end up staring, not hearing. Tiffauge has that effect

Our ogre's conversational detours, however, dazzle rather than annoy. At times he gets caught up in his private notion of the *phoric*, referring to things that carry. Cars fascinate him because they carry people – *anthropophoria*. And people carry objects and other people, in their arms and on their shoulders. Ancient spirits might carry things, too, if they existed. Or as another example, *purity* in Tiffauge's mind becomes opposed to *innocence*. Then come his ideas about symbols. What moral status do they possess? Are they able to act on their own? Exceptional meanings, for this man, affect the ordinary incidents of life.

The story and its musings take Tiffauge from the Paris garage he owns to German Prussia during World War II. Once there "the violent bear it away," as Flannery O'Connor, quoting the Bible, once expressed it. Tiffauge's changed environment eerily resembles *The Erl-King*, a mythic 19th century poem by Prussia's own Goethe. Tiffauge's passions soon become entwined with Prussia's destiny. As the war reaches its climax and the Russian Army pours over Germany's borders, we learn who Tiffauge takes himself to be and what he intends.

This novel ranks high for its originality and style. Because the particulars of the story also appeal to my own tastes, I give *The Ogre* the highest rating. Indeed, this book won France's top literary award in 1970 – that's one of the reasons I ordered it. Barbara Bray has done a fine translation which reads smoothly in English. This provocative tale never actually insists anything mystical took place within its ken. Yet on the whole a phoric spirit enfolds the plot.

Marc says

A very special kind of book, there's no doubt about that. But I'm not sure what to feel about it.

The first third is a mix of diary excerpts, memories and reveries, especially about the youth of Abel Tiffauges, a crippled garageholder in Paris. It's difficult reading, but it's clear enough Tiffauges looks at reality in a very strange way, with special attention to young children (yes, indeed); he sees himself as "childbearer", and Saint Christopher his patron-saint; but a girlfriend refers to the 'ogre'-myth, a humanoid monster in fairy-tales that hunts children.

Then the perspective changes: the Second World War starts and Tiffauges is prisoner of war in a camp in East-Prussia, deep in Germany. He is afforded a lot of freedom, becomes an aide of Göring and eventually ends up in a castle-school of the Hitlerjugend. In the slipstream of nazi-rigor and cruelty he can develop his special "talents". It is here the link is made with the known poem of Goethe, "the alder-king - Der Erbkönig".

I'm not going to reveal the end, but in the midst of the apocalyptic sceneries of the fall of the Third Reich, Tiffauges comes to repent his sins. This part in Eastern Prussia is much easier to read, as an interesting developing story. But this also has a perverse side-effect: hunting red deers, maniacally dissecting and analysing of racial and physical characteristics of children, atrociously training of the Hitlerjugend, ... at a certain point it becomes attractive! Add to this the beautiful depicting of the eastprussian landscapes (dark woods, lovely lakes and grand castles of the teutonic order), all very wagnerian and attractive. Tournier has drawn a lot of criticism for this, as though he wanted to make nazisme likeable. I don't agree, on the contrary; he has succeeded in exhibiting the perversity in every human soul, and he clearly shows the excesses this can lead to. In short, there is a lot in this book to make it a beautiful, but shocking work, but in the end I can not say this was pleasant to read. So a very mixed and ambiguous judgment.

Jacob Wren says

Michel Tournier writes

There's probably nothing more moving in a man's life than the accidental discovery of his own perversion.

and:

The very perfection of its functioning and the terrible energy that went into it were enough to exclude him forever, but he knew no machinery is safe from a piece of grit, and that fate was on his side.

and:

The moth flies on wings of love toward the electric light bulb. And when he gets there, close to it, as near as he can be to that which attracts him irresistibly, he doesn't know what to do. He doesn't know what to do with it. For indeed what can a moth do with an electric lightbulb?

Sarah says

Highly appropriate after just reading Gombrowicz and Sebald. I mean, if I was that kind of person I'd think it was 'meant to be.' Pointing towards some well-ordered sequence of events or something. It's a relief to know, in France at least, they still give awards to books that deserve them.

Habemus_apicellam says

Un viaggio del delirio tra Francia e III Reich che diviene simbolico...

libro affascinante, molto complesso e difficile da riassumere in poche parole. E' un'opera potente, epica e carica di simboli, ma anche realistica, acre e grottesca. Tournier costruisce un protagonista unico, Abel Tiffauges, ossessionato da simboli e predestinazioni, attirato dai bambini di cui vuole farsi "forico" (portatore, nel senso di Cristoforo), in cui la follia disadattata viene magistralmente fatta "percolare" dall'autore tra le righe e le pagine. Le riflessioni sui meccanismi simbolici sono molto fini, quasi filosofiche nel maneggiare una materia spesso orribile e inumana (dai soprusi al collegio fino all'incontro con Goring, per arrivare al castello della HitlerJugend). Potrebbe sembrare un libro pesante, ma Tournier è un grande scrittore, perchè la lettura rimane agevole, anche se molto densa, tra echi di Celine e di Camus, veramente un grande libro!

Deanne says

Very hard book to get into, and I found it difficult to feel anything for the hero, it's a good premise with the main character travelling around Germany during WWII, as both a prisoner and working for various men in history, but nothing really seems to happen.

Philippe Malzieu says

Very difficult book. When I read this book, I'm compelled to think of Hannah Arendt and the banality of evil. This concept asks essential questions on the human nature. Eichmann was a small poor man, Tiffauge, "The ogre" also. The black part of inhuman is placed in each one of us. In a totalitarian mode, those which choose to achieve the most monstrous activities are not so different from those which think of being unable to do it. It is the discomfort of the book. The title comes from a poem of Goethe. The king carries a child and saves it. Tiffauge saves one who escaped from a death camp, but he condemned hundreds of them. And the latent paedophilia is unbearable.

Very hard book

Josh says

Since *The Ogre* is a book obsessed with taxonomy, heraldry, classification of all kinds, I'll start by saying that the author Michel Tournier most reminds me of is Thomas Mann. Mann's playful, ironic fictions seem to

have fallen out of use these days (I for one can't get over Guy Davenport's comparison of him to James Joyce: "Mann imposes meaning; Joyce finds it; Mann looks for weakness in strength; Joyce, for strength in weakness. Mann's novels illustrate ideas; Joyce's return ideas to their origins."); but reading *The Ogre*, I was reminded again of how incredibly fun it is to move around in a novel whose reserves are charged, rather than sapped, by a sense of ideal forms. At times, for all its storytelling and scene-setting and narrative capability, this book seems to be more of an ecology than even the most experimental *nouveaux romans*. Indeed, by the end of it, I got the sense that Tournier is not just system-obsessed, but system-haunted, and that the pages upon pages detailing the main character's private universe were put there as a way to make us see how a modern-day Crusoe (that is, a person who feels completely cut off from human connection) might go about surviving. Loneliness. This book is very lonely. It is also, I think, a testament and warning to anyone who ever spent a year and a half trying to learn Elvish (followed by Dark Elvish, Klingon, and - probably because it was the most strange and "made up sounding" of the languages that my high school offered - Russian). What happens when the world you make in your head takes over? Or, to put it more even handedly (I hope), How do we light the mental/emotional candelabra inside us without eclipsing the very real and consequential world outside us? How do we keep from destroying/being destroyed? In places, Tournier's book may be in a little too much of a hurry the answer these questions, to follow the arrow of its logic. I wanted more of the tide pools. But the last fifty pages or so are legitimately visionary and horrible, an inverted King Matt the First, and worth the momentum.

cardulelia carduelis says

This is the weirdest WWII book I've read yet.

The *Erl-King* deals with the question of what happens to the sinister in times of war: people who likely, and in this case definitely, would have ended up in the penal system - what happens when they slip through the net and into a society of upheaval.

At least, I think that's what it was mostly about?

Over the *Erl King*'s six uneven sections we follow the life of Abel Tiffaugues, switching sporadically between his whimsical narrative and the third person. Abel's a bemusing character: all at once gentle giant and a self-declared, unyielding predator.

And he preys, for the most part, on young children.

Much of the novel is about Abel justifying his pedophilia: from disturbing episodes of power-play in his catholic school to bizarre analogies to the 'Euphoric' tales of St. Christopher. Although there is never any explicit sexual abuse, the devoted attention he bestows on children is oftentimes incredibly disturbing:

The honey secreted in their ears is as golden as bees', but tastes so quintessentially bitter it would repel anyone but me.

And the means to which he acquires said children (view spoiler) only highlights his blinkered devotion.

Offsetting the dramatic themes of Abel's predatory nature and his interactions with the Nazis are splendid naturalist passages set in *Reichsjägerhof Rominten*, a gorgeous hunting lodge in Prussia surrounded by forests and deer.

Tournier's eye and ear for the outdoors infuses the book and, alongside Tiffauger's musings, the narrative

often feels like it's wallowing in hedonism. .

Abel's perversions extend to animals too: I've honestly never read so much praise about pigeons. There's also some really great moments with his horse BlueBeard. He goes into some detail about horses defecating and how they're really elegant about it and so they're basically Anal Angels.

ANAL ANGELS.

Abel is riding one through town and it takes a poo and he vividly describes the back arching, the bum clenching, the sound of it plooping into the street and imagines that it is him doing it. And is proud.

The blurb doesn't prepare you for THAT, does it?

The Erl-King is a solid 3-stars despite the intrigue. For one it was a chore to read, never being quite beautiful or odd enough that I could forgive the meandering plot. It's a very long book in which only a few key events happen. The language is flowery and full of hidden meaning, I imagine much of it lost in translation. For example the first section of the book is penned by Abel's left hand, his right being injured, and is called 'Sinister Writings of Tiffauges', at least my rudimentary French allowed me to catch *that* one but how many others were missed?

I'm also not really sure what this book is meant to *be* and who it's for. It's not necessarily a war story, if anything the war allows Abel to prey on his desires unbounded. If it had stayed with Abel's narrative for the entire book one could argue that it is a character study but of course it does not.

Like Abel himself, the book doesn't quite fall into any bin.

I'm not sure if it's worth reading, but if you can try it in the original French.

Jim Coughenour says

The "ogre" of the title is Abel Tiffauges, a French mechanic who first appears a kind of autistic naif, strange rather than frightening in his obsessions (or perversions). It begins in France, 1938, in the years before Hitler's invasion — then as the war progresses, the setting moves eastward, into a winter-world of horror, and ultimately, transcendence — which I admit doesn't tell you much. It's an unusual, demanding novel; to my mind, a work of genius, unlike anything I've ever read, including the other great, equally odd novels of Tournier: *Gemini*; *Friday*; *The Four Wise Men*.

Not a book for the weak-hearted.

Pe?ivo says

Král duch? dostal v roce 1972 francouzskou Prix Goncourt. Což je n?co jako Grand prix, akorát to místo formulí jezdí knížky.

A dostal ji právem. Král duch? je p?íb?h francouzského Honzy Nedv?da (2 metry, spíš svaly než mozek,

řistá duše), automechanika, ktorej m?l p?řlíš rád d?ti. Tim ale nemyslim, že by byl pedobr, prost? jen oby?ejnej obr, ktorej byl neprávem odsouzenej za zlo?in, který nespáchal. Jelikož sed?l v base v období mobilizace proti Hitlerovi, tak se tam moc neoh?ál a šel bránit vlast. Ani p?i této ?innosti se ale moc neoh?ál, protože ho skoro hned zabásli a odvedli do pracovního tábora. Jelikož byl tábor pracovní, tak ho tam neoh?áli.

Z pracovního tábora následovaly pom?rn? rychlé p?esuny v aktivitách - jelikož m?l rád nejen d?ti, ale i zví?ata, tak chvilku sloužil na panství Reichsjägermeistersa (!!!) Göringa, pak p?ešel do Kaltenbornu, což byla instituce Hitlerjugend, kde se v pr?b?hu války vypracoval až na vedoucího. Jako Francouz totiž nemusel pro nácky bojovat na front? a moh tak zastávat tyhle funkce.

Nutno podotknout, že tenhle obr byl o ?ty?i levely víc Dan Nekone?ný než samotnej Honza Nedv?d - od mala si myl hlavu v záchod?, krmil holuby z vlastní pusy, jedl jen syrový maso a m?l strašn? malýho pindíka a 72 dioptrií. Krom toho si vlasama malých nack? vycpával polštá?e a pe?iny a dával si jejich ušní šušn? jako delikatesu. Ale jak ?řkaj N?mci: Proti gustu žádnej protektorát.

Po p?e?tení mám smíšený pocity. Na jednu stranu te? vim spoustu informací o druhovým ?len?ní srnc?, anatomii sval? a jejich rozdíl? u koní a srnc?, náckovský fr?ky oddíl? SS i wehrmacht, ale na druhou stranu je mi to vlastn? úpln? u zadku a celý by to mohlo bejt o 100 stran kratší. Chvílema zbyte?n? zdlouhavý, takže tomu dávám jen 7 nálet? z deseti.

Jim says

If you wish to be an ogre, then it is very important that you not only be bullied mercilessly, but that you react by choosing someone completely unsuitable as a role model. This is what happens to Abel Tiffauges, the son of an auto mechanic, who despite his height is treated like dirt at a Catholic school and ends by inheriting his father's garage.

Along the way, he develops some strange ideas regarding children. While he is not a pederast and never even attempts to initiate any overt molestation. Yet he is falsely accused by a little girl to whom he has given rides in his car of rape. Just when he is about to be adjudged as guilty of crime, a sympathetic judge frees him providing he joins the army. It is only days before the German invasion of France, and the Phony War is about to turn into a real shooting war.

Before long, Abel is captured by the Germans and sent to a prison camp in East Prussia, where he develops a reputation as a trusted, hard-working prisoner. Because of his ability with motor vehicles, he is transferred to Goering's giant hunting lodge at Rominten, and from there to the *napola* of Kaltenborn, where he becomes an assistant to a racial theorist named Otto Blaettchen.

These napolas are short for National Political Academies, where German youth are trained to become SS officers. As always, Tiffauges enters into the spirit of the institution and even takes over Blaettchen's position when the latter is transferred to the Eastern Front. In the end, Tiffauges is so successful in finding prototypically Aryan-looking recruits that he develops a fearsome reputation in the Prussian hinterland:

This warning is addressed to all mothers in the areas of Gehlenburg, Sensburg, Loetzen and Lyck!

BEWARE OF THE OGRE OF KALTENBORN!

He is after your children. He roves through our country stealing children. If you have any, never forget the Ogre—he never forgets them! Don't let them go out alone. Teach them to run away and hide if they see a giant on a blue horse with a pack of black hounds. If he comes to see you, don't yield to his threats, don't be taken in by his promises. All mothers should be guided by one certainty: If the Ogre takes your child, you will NEVER see him again!

At the napola, the boys (and girls) are raised in a military discipline heavily laden with the ersatz symbolism of a quasi-fictitious Teutonic past.

What eventually happens, of course, is that the Russians invade on their way to take Berlin. The ending of Michel Tournier's *The Ogre* is exceedingly strange, and not altogether successful.

The book does, however, show how one on the borders of evil can still be strangely innocent, while contributing to the overall evils of National Socialism.

The Ogre is probably one of the best French novels of the second half of the Twentieth Century. Tournier succeeds in keeping the reader enthralled from the first page to the last.

***Dragonfly* says**

Dopada mi se kako su Svetlana i Franja Termacic preveli Turnijeov roman. Posebno je zanimljivo kako su resili nedoumicu oko naziva.

U francuskom originalu, roman je nazvan "Le roi des aulnes", doslovno prevedeno - Kralj jovà.

Posto su Termacici smatrali da takav naziv zvuci prilicno nespretno, odlucili su se za Kralja Vilovnjaka i tako ucinili jasnom aluziju na Geteovu pesmu koja se pominje u romanu.

Dalje, "Le roi des aulnes" je francuski prevod pomenute Geteove pesme "Der Erlkönig".

Aleksa Santic je pesmu nazvao Bauk.

Rec bauk, koja je hipokoristik za medveda (Srpski mitoloski recnik) nije pak adekvatna skandinavsko-germanskom Erlkönigu.

Naposletku, Danilo Kis je, na predlog Termacica, preveo pesmu, okrunivsi Kralja Vilovnjaka i ne izneverivsi Geteov duh.

Kralj Vilovnjak

J. V. Gete

Ko jaše kroz vetar ogrnut tminom?
To je otac sa svojim sinom;
?vrsto de?aka stiska na grudi,

Grli ga brižno, štiti ga od studa.

Sine, zašto skrivaš lice iza šaka? –
Zar ne vidiš, o?e, Kralja-Vilovnjaka?
Vilovnjaka sa plaštom i s krunom ko plamen? –
To je, sine, samo magle pramen. –

“Milo dete, kreni sa mnom i ne strepi!
Igra?u se s tobom igara lepih;
Na sprudu šareno cve?e cvati,
Odežde od zlata ima moja mati.”

Zar ne ?uješ, o?e, Vilovnjak me zove,
Tiho obe?ava mnoge igre nove? –
Smiri se, sine, spokojan budi:
To kroz mrtvo liš?e vetar bludi. –

“De?a?e, k meni korake usmeri,
Lepo ?e te moje do?ekati k?eri;
Moje k?eri vode no?nu igru svoju,
Tebe uljuljkuju, igraju ti, poju.”

O?e, zar ne vidiš k?eri Vilovnjaka
Onamo u predelima mraka? –
Vidim, sine, pogled me ne vara:
Srebrnim sjajem svetli vrba stara. –

“Volim te, zanet sam tvojim lepim stasom;
Ne kreneš li milom, ote?u te, ?asom.”
O?e, o?e, sad me zgrabio iz mraka!
Boli me zagrljaj Kralja-Vilovnjaka!

Oca prože jeza, pa jurnu još ja?e,
A u naru?ju mu dete rida, pla?e;
U dvorište s mukom i skršan ulete,
A u zagrljaju ve? mu mrtvo dete.

Roman opor.

Prva glava je pisana u prvom licu (Zlokobni Zapisi Abela Tifoza), kasnija poglavlja vodi pero sveznajućeg pripovedaca da bi se, povremeno, opet uplele lucidne i opskurne stranice Zlokobnih Zapisa.

Fina recenica, krhka, veoma lepo izvajana. Cesto veoma duboka, mudra uz opulentni zacin tifozevskog cinizma.

Upravo taj tifozevski cinizam ovo delo cini posebnim!

U Tifozu slutim tamu, gustu i grimiznu, kao kada se kroz zdenac meka predvećerja sluti kisa koja tinja i

pucketa nad zemljom.

U ovom romanu ima necega duboko potresnog. Iskonskog.

Svakako neceg dragog a izgubljenog.

Kao kada se pod cipkom na klaviru cuva talir il' pero, nekakav spomen, celov na rubu maramice.

Uplitanje rata (Drugi svetski rat) unosi teskobu medju redove.

Bol koja ogrce svet dok gorko mirise paralizovana misao, to usahlo meso.

Tifoz, s pocetka introvertan, u trenu kada dobija golubove na cuvanje, razodeva posvecenost, neznost, ljubav cak!

Vrlo je lepa gradacija zivotinja koje simbolisu Tifozev emotivni pomak. Golub - jelen - konj.

Traziti oprost u urusenoj kapeli secanja, sanjati trgovce golubijim perjem koji sapucu da svet nije izgubljen od Empatije.

Joselito Honestly and Brilliantly says

This earned a star from me for the research and inventive musings the author had obviously done to do pedantic exhibitions about:

1. monsters;
2. the Aristotelian concept of "potency" (which he managed to tie up with the sexual act);
3. the two types of women, the "woman-trinket" (one who can be manipulated by men) and the "woman-landscape" (one whom a man can only visit);
4. benign inversion (evil becoming good, sort of) and the malign inversion (the reverse);
5. euphoria, phoria ("to carry"), phoric, phore, anthropophoric (the principal protagonist, Abel Tiffauges, likes to carry sick, young boys in his arms, experiencing euphoria in the process);
6. atmospheric saturation, e.g., when an atmosphere is saturated with beauty one feels an intoxication that has a distant affinity with phoric ecstasy (like, again, holding a wounded child in one's arms);
7. photography as the raising of an object to "imaginary power";

8. developing photo films as involving the inverse and reversible worlds;
9. the French Penal Code;
10. the use of pigeons during war, the different kinds of such pigeons;
11. the peat-bog men (carcasses of long dead men preserved in peat bogs);
12. Nazi hunting lodges, their games, animal droppings;
13. the different ways of measuring stags' antlers;
14. the dynamics of horses;
15. the origins of great East Prussian families traced way back to the Teutonic Knights;
16. human twins;
17. human hair;
18. symbols in war; and
19. different positions of boys while asleep.

I also gave it another star because although I already "knew" the overall complexion of the story and its probable trajectory (what with its dead giveaways : the "ogre" title, its first 1/3 part consisting of Tiffauges's "sinister diary", his huge body and the smallness of his penis, his obvious megalomania and pedophilic tendencies, the war era, France and later Germany as settings) it turned out differently and quite beyond my expectations.

Apart from these, however, I felt this was just a piece of crap. Yes, I've read the other reviews, and saw its high GR ratings. But what can I possibly do when, after finishing it, I felt that the author had just taken a dump inside my brain?

Jalil says

"The Ogre" in English. For those who like to get a bit of philosophical speculation in their fiction, and appreciate literature on a deeper artistic level, this work is a giant. I'm very hard-pressed to think of another 20th century work that provokes thought to the level this one does, and simultaneously satisfies the reader with a gratifying story. Full of postmodernist juxtapositions and examinations, this book will leave you wondering about everything from your own sexuality to the role of religion in humanity. Read alongside Kafka's "Metamorphosis" for a thrilling and confusing upset of your perception of reality.

Sinem A. says

Yazar'ın ilk okuduğum kitabı. Mitolojinin gerçekliği yedirilmesi çok güzeldi. 2. Dünya Savaşı Nazi Almanyası etkilerini Goethe'nin Kızla Ağlar Kralı'nın verdiği esinle erkekte annelik güdülerini anlatmak... Bence hissedilmesi gereken bir deneyim. Başka türlü bakmak isteyenler için.

Leen says

Ik heb mijn tanden stukgebeten op De elzenkoning, maar 't is uit. Het is uit! Ik ben er vanaf! Het was nog eens een Blufboek, want die lijst wordt maar niet korter, want onbewust of eigenlijk zeer bewust mijd ik de boeken, Literatuur met een grote L, van de lijst omdat ze stuk voor stuk moeilijk zijn.

Weloverdacht in elkaar gevlochten schrijfsels zonder al te veel gevoel, zwaardere thema's, te veel symboliek, ge moet uw hoofd erbij houden of ge struikelt over zinnen. Het is spartelen om in het verhaal te geraken én te blijven.

Het hoofdpersonage vervulde me met weezin: zoals hij kicke op kleine kinderen, dat was zum kotsen, het typische voorbeeld van een pedofiel die zelf niet inziet dat hij fout is, er hangt zoveel stilte tussen de alinea's en hoofdstukken, er is zoveel plaats voor mijn verbeelding om op hol te slaan tussen de strak uitgelijnde gebeurtenissen, tja, dat beeld van hem viel niet meer recht te trekken. Toen de schrijver ook nog eens besloot de gruwel van Auschwitz in twee zinnen samen te vatten, had ik er genoeg van, maar aangezien ik toen op de laatste bladzijden zat - eindelijk! - ben ik blijven spartelen tot ik het boek kon dichtslaan en opzij leggen. Gooien, bijna.

Het is dit soort boeken dat me naar de duistere diepten van de onder boekenwormen zo gevreesde leesdip sleurt: het zuigt alle plezier uit de leeservaring, ik keek nog liever naar films dan een boek - eender hetwelk, maar zeker niet dit! - vast te pakken. Zo erg was het dus.

En zo'n luie lezer ben ik geworden. Moeite doen om een boek te lezen, te begrijpen, tot me door te laten dringen - ik kan het schijnbaar niet meer opbrengen. Daarom durf ik het niet helemaal afschrijven. Zoals dikwijls bij 'moeilijkere' boeken ben ik bang dat ik me laat afschrikken door de stijve zinnen, door wat er niet wordt uitgesproken maar wat iedere 'goeie' lezer makkelijk van tussen de zinnen uit zou moeten kunnen oppikken. Misschien ben ik gewoon nog te jong voor sommige boeken. Zoals ik De avonden als negentienjarige absolute rommel vond, maar het negen jaar later met plezier verslond, moet ik De Elzenkoning op mijn vijfendertigste misschien nog eens opnieuw oppakken. Ik laat het alleszins in mijn boekenkast staan; want je weet maar nooit.
