

Graywolf Press announces



THE LOVERS OF ALGERIA by Anouar Benmalek

Translated from the French by Joanna Kilmartin

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“A captivating novel.” —☆*Publishers Weekly*

Winner of the prestigious French Rachid Prize, *THE LOVERS OF ALGERIA* (August 2004) is now available in the United States.

“I was swept along by the beautifully constructed story of Anna and Nasreddine, whose love survives a half century of war and terror in post-colonial Algeria. Benmalek is a master of the poetics of separation, capable of evoking a single heartbreaking scene—the slaughter of an elephant by an impoverished traveling circus—or the pain and longing of a thirty-year absence. He has given us a *Plague* for the 1990s, not as allegory but as tragic realism.” —ALICE KAPLAN

Nine-year-old Jallal is old enough to know that his life in Algeria is precarious at best. Having run away from home, he lives by selling peanuts and single cigarettes on the street. The proposal by the elderly Swiss woman named Anna is shocking and preposterous: go to the mountains with her, as a translator, so she can find her lost lover from decades ago and pray over the graves of their murdered children.

Anna and Jallal’s journey is wrought with danger and unspeakable tragedy. It was under similar circumstances that Anna first met the Arab Nasreddine. Ousted from the traveling circus where she performed as a trapeze artist, she had little choice but to accept Nasreddine’s offer to live with him. But it was here, amid poverty, racism, and random violence, that they fell in love.

THE LOVERS OF ALGERIA is an unflinchingly candid story about a country where terrorism and government corruption is commonplace. As Anna and Nasreddine, beaten by time and memory, circle each other in Algeria, Benmalek shows with heart-wrenching detail that love can endure even the most inhuman conditions.

ANOUAR BENMALEK was born in Casablanca in 1956 and now lives in France. After the 1988 riots in Algeria in protest of government policies, he became one of the founders of the Algerian Committee against Torture. **JOANNA KILMARTIN** is a notable translator of contemporary French fiction. She is also the translator of the final volume of Marcel Proust’s *Selected Letters* and of Patrick Modiano’s *The Search Warrant*.

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