

The Travels of Daniel Ascher

Déborah Lévy-Bertherat

Adriana Hunter, Translator

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When Hélène Chambon, great-niece of author Daniel Roche, pen name H. R. Sanders, moves to Paris to study archeology, she encounters a mystery much more engrossing than her studies—one that not only involves her enigmatic, eccentric, world-traveling relative, but that threatens to shake all she believes about herself as well.

Hélène has always been embarrassed by her great-uncle's wildly elaborate descriptions of his adventures. Although she has never read his Black Insignia adventure series, the devotion with which her friend Guillaume, a fellow archeology student, regards the books and their reclusive author arouses her curiosity. Following clues that include fake postmarks and a hidden room, Hélène learns of Paris's dark underworld during the time of the Occupation, family secrets, and the power of stories to make us whole.

Lévy-Bertherat's first novel is the haunting, powerful story of a mysterious man and the identities he assumes to deal with the losses and trauma of war, but it is equally about a girl who grows from a self-absorbed teen into a young woman whose inner world expands to include compassion for the pain and suffering of others.

Déborah Lévy-Bertherat teaches comparative literature at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris and has translated works by Lermontov and Gogol.

Adriana Hunter is the award-winning British translator of more than fifty French novels and a contributor to the international magazine *Words Without Borders*.

KRISTINE MORRIS (Summer 2015)

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