

Les coeurs autonomes

D.Foenkinos

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Hedengrens at Stureplan Stockholm, the largest bookstore in the city, has a rebate at their annual sale. Sales prices being slashed in half. But as usual there is little that attracts the eye, even less to encourage any sustained perusal by the same. But I pick up a Livre de Poche for almost nothing, a love story of sorts which may provide me with additional vocabulary.

The author turns out to be a certain David Foenkinos born in 1974 and thus belonging to a younger generation coming to age in the 1990's. For that generation birth came a bit too late, they seem to have missed out on all the fun of the 60's, in particular the magic year of 1968, weak and farcical repeats of which can be had in these late decades (never mind that 1968 was by itself a weak and farcical repeat of earlier more serious revolutions and social upheavals). The book is written in what one believes is the usual French style of ostensible sophistication which in the end leaves you cold and empty. There is a love story of course, An *amour fou* which is empty and boring at the core, but nevertheless passionate as a desperate compensation. It is about to fizzle out when a third party enters on the scene galvanizing the situation. Some kind of terrorist attack is planned, but of course not seen as such but more in the 'revolutionary' mood of the Baden-Meinhof gang. It is not clear what it is all about, but things go awry, as they tend to do with amateurs, and the whole thing ends in a meaningless carnage,

In short a disappointment and one puts down the book with little regret once it is consumed. Some practice it may have provided in reading, but not much of even that I am afraid.

April 9, 2018 **Ulf Persson:** *Prof.em, Chalmers U.of Tech., Göteborg Sweden* ulfp@chalmers.se