



Precarious Lease

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Jacqueline Feldman

Precarious Lease

In her extraordinary non-fiction debut, Jacqueline Feldman tells the story of Le Bloc, a legendary squat situated at the far edge of Paris, near where the banlieue begins. Opened in 2012, the squat took in artists and activists as well as immigrants from around the world. They lived and worked within its labyrinthine structure, continually threatened with eviction and existential as well as financial precarity. Over many years Feldman, a reporter from the US, follows a cast of itinerant, displaced characters, tracing the fate of a counterculture under austerity while investigating the trending use of a legal device by which squatters could receive a reprieve from eviction but were reduced in status to property guardians. In the tradition of Walter Benjamin and other chroniclers of Paris, she draws on its revolutionary and bohemian history while sounding issues of the most contemporary urgency about hospitality and refuge, creativity and precarity, ecology and utopia. With gripping candour and journalistic precision, *Precarious Lease* is a thrilling dramatization of late-stage possibilities for co-existence in the ruins of a capital city.

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'Feldman's Precarious Lease is marked by erudition, astringence, biting wit, and the perspicacious awe of a seasoned examiner of our time, attributes bound to be hallmarks of her work for years to come. Diving under the rubble of social and class collapse, Feldman deftly maneuvers between investigative reportage and essayist forays while weaving through this tapestry a tone so sharp yet compassionate, so personal, it feels like a friend delivering dire news from the front lines of the world.'

Ocean Vuong, author of *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*

Jacqueline Feldman

Jacqueline Feldman was the recipient of a Fulbright grant for her reporting in Paris, where she lived for many years. An Albertine Translation Laureate for her previous book, *On Your Feet: A Novel in Translations*, which features her translation of a story by Nathalie Quintane, and a graduate of the EHESS-Paris, she teaches expository writing at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her essays have appeared in *Triple Canopy*, *The White Review* and the *Paris Review*.