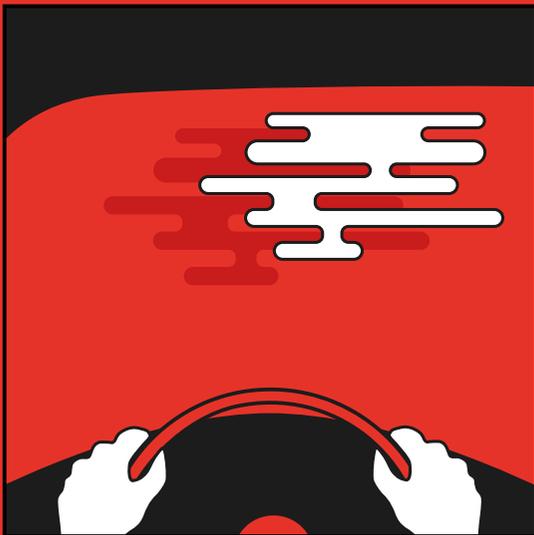


PRIZE POLAR EN SÉRIES 2021



L'ANGE ROUGE François Médéline (La Manufacture de livres, 2020) (RED ANGEL)

Film references:

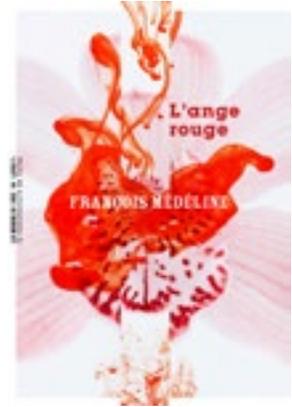
Les rivières pourpres, Mathieu Kassovitz
Seven, David Fincher

If it were a serie:

Luther, Neil Cross
True Detective, Nic Pizzolatto
Moloch, Arnaud Malherbe

Format :

Serial series, several seasons potential



We are at the end of the 90s; a makeshift raft floats along the Saone River and crosses Lyon with a crucified corpse on board. The river is not peaceful anymore and this skilfully staged murder, signed with an orchid painted on the body, exposed to all, will stir up the police and the media. The criminal police intercept the raft and experts start analysing the corpse under the astonishing eyes of passersby and a hoard of journalists rattling around.

Finding the murderer will be a race against time for six investigators under pressure: the entire team of Lieutenant Alain Dubak is requisitioned. They are all lining up with Dubak, especially Captain Nicole Piroli, aka « Granny », a loyal friend, a little gruff and overflowing with affection, as well as Véronique, the procedure queen, touching mother of a sick child who stands straight in her boots despite the mud surrounding her. What was meant to be the case of a lifetime will shake up their existence because at all costs, they must prevent another murder from happening.

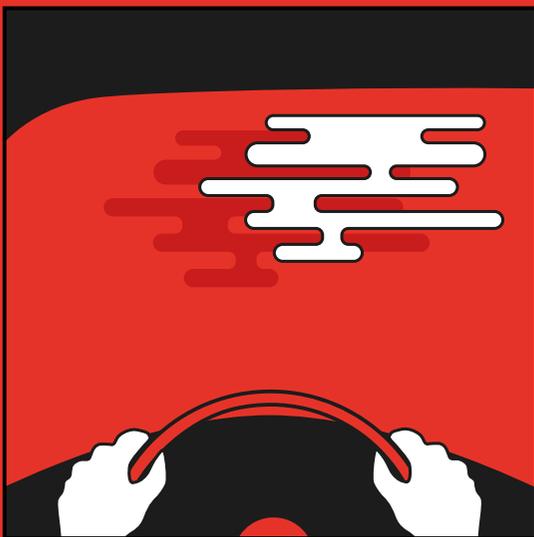
Thanks to its DNA, the identification of the body leads the investigators to look into his family, living in great poverty. One problem though: his mother and his half-sister haven't heard of him for more than ten years... As the investigation begins, other murders take place, like a scavenger hunt across Lyon, and puzzle pieces are revealed. Dubak also has to fight his inner demons that cannot stand still in the turmoil he must face.

AN UNEXPECTED TRIO FOR A HECTIC SERIES

Dubak is a tormented soul. In addition of being a hot-blooded neurotic affected by his divorce, he is addicted to cocaine. This addiction is more than a simple detail giving a feature to the character as his use of drugs triggers highly visual hallucinations. His assistant, Granny (who also has her own addictions: sweets and nightsticks) and the very procedural Véronique, form with Dubak a trio of high-profile investigators.

These characters, however proactive, are confounded when facing a serial killer taunting them with a new stunt just as the police think that they have reached a decisive milestone. The investigation is made of constant upheavals, giving François Médéline's writing the rhythm of a hectic and nervous series, a rhythm infusing in all characters, caught up in a frantic race, like on drugs, at the risk of going insane.

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A TACKY ATMOSPHERE

The novel offers a striking imagery giving momentum to the story as early as the opening scene and the crucified corpse. The murder is macabre, especially as the staging is disturbing. Why is there a delicate painting of an orchid on a corpse exposed to all? The situation is intriguing and immediately sets the story's morbid atmosphere. However, the rhythm will slow down in order to notify the reader that the police are at a standstill despite their gesticulations. To watch them getting bogged down when the pressure rises is part of the mechanism which suddenly switches.

In this world of criminal police, by being confronted with these atrocities, investigators are physically and psychologically marked. They no longer hesitate to break the rules to save time, to overcome the frustration. Violence is everywhere.

This initial crime, steeped in mystery, adds an occult dimension to this psychedelic intrigue.

A VISCERAL ANCHORAGE IN LYON

The anchorage in the Lyon bullring is assumed: the city is both a character and a fiction setting. Its geographical location and its architecture are thoroughly developed. The suburbs, the Presqu'île and shady nightclubs become a stage for the worst vicissitudes. The most sordid corners of Lyon are sublimed, and the city also becomes a place of comfort, in the « bouchons » restaurants and bars, during gatherings with friends to relax or, simply to have a bite to eat.

The capital of the Gauls becomes the setting of a both disturbing and efficient intrigue, in the line of James Ellroy's thrillers, to which François Médéline claims lineage. Since L'Ange Rouge is the first volume of a series of novels, Lyon is not likely to deliver its secrets just yet.

A FEW LINES FROM THE NOVEL:

« A corpse makes you believe in ghosts. I don't know why I became a cop. Perhaps just to annoy my mother. »

THE AUTHOR:

Born in 1977 near Lyon, François Médéline has a doctorate in political sociology and in linguistics. He worked in politics for ten years, as a counsellor, writer, chief of staff and communications director for several elected representatives, before devoting himself to writing. Besides being a novelist, François Médéline is also a screenwriter. Furthermore, he sailed across the Northern Atlantic Ocean and coaches children in a rugby school.

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