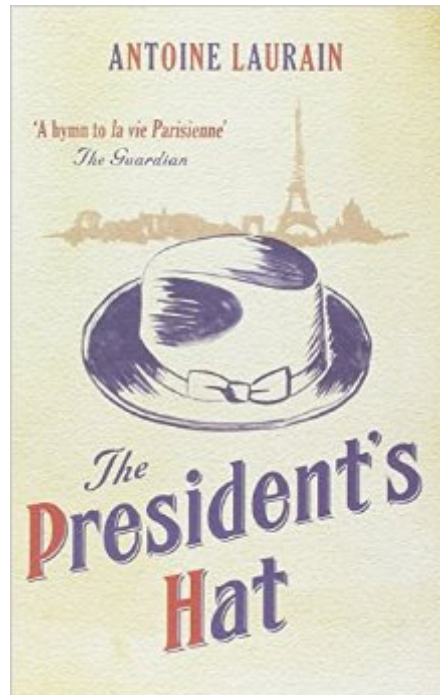


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The President's Hat



Synopsis

This prize-winning French bestseller is a charming fable about the power of a hat that takes the reader on a roller-coaster ride through French life during the Mitterrand years. Dining alone in an elegant Parisian brasserie, accountant Daniel Mercier can hardly believe his eyes when President François Mitterrand sits down to eat at the table next to him. After the presidential party has gone, Daniel discovers that Mitterrand's black felt hat has been left behind. After a few moments' soul-searching, Daniel decides to keep the hat as a souvenir of an extraordinary evening. It's a perfect fit, and as he leaves the restaurant Daniel begins to feel somehow . . . different. Has Daniel unwittingly discovered the secret of supreme power? For two years the iconic item of headgear plays with the lives of the men and women who wear it, bringing them success that had previously eluded them. Antoine Laurain's brilliantly orchestrated tour captures entertaining portraits of a rich gallery of characters. Shot through with a delicious, wicked sense of humor, *The President's Hat* is a vivid re-creation of the everyday life of an era. "As entertaining as it is original, this is a story to enjoy like a chocolate with a surprise centre." *Marie France* "An enjoyable trip into the heart of the 1980s." *Le Figaro* "Impossible to resist" *L'Express* Antoine Laurain was born in Paris. He is a writer, collector, and director of several short films.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (106 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #41,469 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #60 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Self-Help & Psychology](#) #115 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Satire](#) #137 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Historical > Cultural Heritage](#)

Customer Reviews

The milliners advertising used to say "to get ahead, get a hat". They would very much approve of this book. Daniel Mercier is a Mr Average - or perhaps a Monsieur Mediocre. He's a lowly

accountant until one evening he finds himself dining next to French President, François Mitterrand, who leaves the restaurant without his hat. When Daniel decides to keep it, his life starts to change and he feels somehow more confident. In other strands of the story, Fanny Marquant is having an affair with an older man who clearly has no intention of leaving his wife while celebrated perfumer Pierre Aslan has lost his ability to detect smells and to create perfumes. Bernard Lavallée, meanwhile is struggling to live up to the right wing standards of his wife's friends and starts to read the more left wing papers. At some point, all will come into contact with the President's hat and it will have an impact on all of them. Antoine Laurain's short novel, is a delight. It's as light and subtle as a soufflé and is both wryly amusing and entertaining. The first three of the story's threads in particular are excellently worked and when they come together they are both funny and thoughtful. The Lavallée thread worked less successfully for me but then that is perhaps because it rather stands alone from the other three. Behind Laurain's humour though is a subtle look at what Mitterrand brought to France and the reaction of the wealthy to his socialist values. The hat stands for the good intentions that he brought and suggests that as much as anything what he sought was a change in attitudes. But while there is depth to the narrative, first and foremost it is superbly entertaining.

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