REVIEW

Notes pour passer l'hiver, by Antoine Wauters

by Nicolas Becard

November 16, 2026 · On *Notes pour passer l'hiver (L'Arbalète/Gallimard)*

Short texts, antihistamine words and Marie Baudet's hot-water-bottle illustrations: a precious survival manual for kicking out the winter gloom. The watchword: give yourself a break.



Notes pour passer l'hiver (Notes for Getting Through Winter) ❄️

5 p.m., forced to switch on the light. Here we are, it was bound to happen, again. The clocks changing should have warned me; every year it's the same old song. Autumn, well under way, rolls out its carpet of ochres for winter.

Same as always, granted, except that this year Saint Antoine presents us with a true vade mecum for kicking the gloomy enemy out of our heads.

A hundred pages, short texts, antihistamine words, all set with hot-water-bottle illustrations that warm the kidneys as much as the heart ❤️

With every page turned, the antidote injected.

Intimate, sensitive, sometimes far from common sense, often counter-intuitive, the watchword:
Give yourself a break.

So the winter blues are not inevitable. Like the Scandinavians and their famous light bars, hunt down dopamine wherever it hides, walk for a long time, wash your body, toe by toe, lie down on the humus of books, roll around in words.

Step back from the world without leaving it.

Each text is a prescription, an address. Read them out loud, shout them in a whisper. From you to you. For you.

And when you come back, be there.
Truly.

This walk-in review, prescribed by teleconsultation, falls well short of this precious survival manual.

🎨 Illustrations: @hyperbaudet

— Nicolas Becard

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