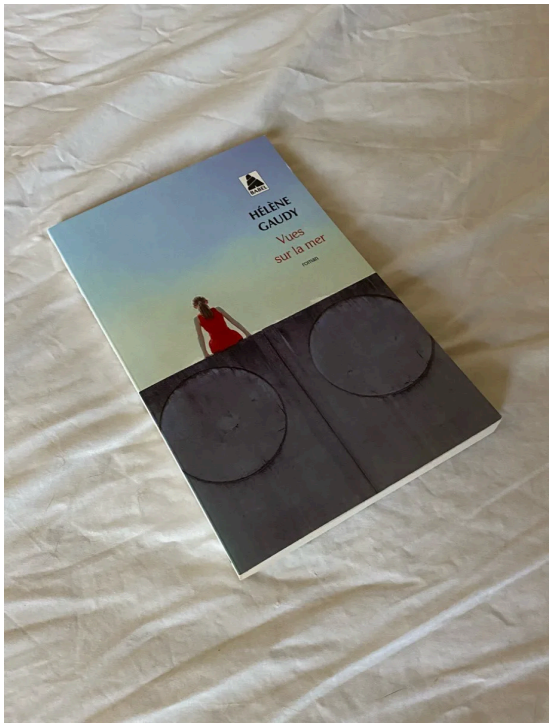
REVIEW

Vues sur la mer, by Hélène Gaudy

by Estelle Normand

November 10, 2026 · On *Vues sur la mer (Babel, Actes Sud)*

Short scenes, always the same opening, "— Would you like a room with a sea view?": a fascinating kaleidoscope of a debut novel about a woman who has left home.



Vues sur la mer
Hélène Gaudy's debut novel
Éditions Les Impressions Nouvelles (2006)
Babel, Actes Sud (2020)
110 pages

A title I came across by chance this summer while out buying envelopes. Read it straight away. I loved it. Short scenes, somewhere between a novel and a collection, always the same opening

"— Would you like a room with a sea view?"

always the woman, the red, the receptionist, the waitress, the family, always? not quite, because each time one element changes and something shifts: the setting, the characters, the dynamics, the gazes, the thoughts.

But always, yes, the solitude of this woman who has left home, and the question of where she is headed: stay, go back, leave again, where to go.

the apartment
roadside
wild coast
city centre
under the snow
the forest
heading south

so many possibilities, string theory unfolded for this woman balancing on a tightrope, and perhaps the key lies hidden in all these lives lived in parallel.

A fascinating kaleidoscope of a novel that I often think back to.

— Estelle Normand

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