

The Last One

A Novel

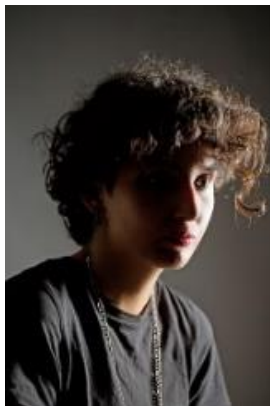
Fatima Daas

Translated by Lara Vergnaud

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Drawn from the author's experiences growing up in a Paris banlieue, this highly-anticipated debut explores the diverse, often conflicting facets of her identity — French, Algerian, Muslim, lesbian

The youngest daughter of Algerian immigrants, Fatima Daas is raised in a home where love and sexuality are considered taboo and signs of affection avoided. Living in the majority-Muslim Clichy-sous-Bois, she often spends more than three hours a day on public transport to and from the city, where she feels like a tourist observing Parisian manners. She goes from unstable student to maladjusted adult, doing four years of therapy – her longest relationship. But as she gains distance from her family and comes into her own, she grapples more directly with her attraction to women and how it fits with her religion, which she continues to practice. When Nina comes into her life, she doesn't know exactly what she needs but feels that something crucial has been missing.



About the author: **FATIMA DAAS** (the author's pseudonym) was born in 1995 and grew up in the Parisian banlieue of Clichy-sous-Bois, where her parents settled after arriving from Algeria. In high school Daas participated in writing workshops led by Tanguy Viel. Well aware of the contradictions, she defines herself as Muslim, feminist and gay.

Published in French in 2020, *The Last One* was the winner of the prestigious Prix Les Inrockuptibles in 2020, and Germany's International Literature Prize in 2021. The [Guardian](#) recently interviewed Fatima for a piece on international authors with forthcoming UK books, writing that 'Daas was hailed as the voice of a new generation for her first novel... (Her) overriding message is that you don't have to give up any part of yourself: you can inhabit a host of seemingly clashing identities at once.'

About the translator: **LARA VERGNAUD** is a translator of prose, creative nonfiction, and scholarly works from the French. She is the recipient of two PEN/Heim Translation Fun Grants and a French Voices Grand Prize, and has been nominated for the National Translation Award.

'Every word of this autobiographical-fictional novel testifies to the narrator's fearlessness, openness and vulnerability. Fatima Daas' words are so precisely and powerfully placed because she needs her words to create a world in which she wants to live.'

Jury of the German International Literature Prize for 2021

***** Please turn over to read more praise for *The Last One* *****

For further information, review copies and interview requests, please contact Victoria Gilder at victoriagilderpr@gmail.com / 07841 678503

www.hoperoadpublishing.com



Advance praise for *The Last One*:

‘Fatima Daas’ debut novel signals the presence of an exciting voice that commands attention and insists on complexity. Whether she is unpacking family ties or tracing the ways queerness dovetails with other identities, Daas stops you in your tracks with what seems like a quiet symphony until you realize it is in fact a crescendo of what it means to be human.’

Mona Eltahawy, author of *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*

‘In *The Last One*, Fatima Daas uses words like bold and vivid brush strokes, exploring identity through lyricism. I tore through this incredible work of art in one sitting, but I often took a moment to catch my breath and admire the defiant beauty at the heart of this book.’

Abdi Nazemian, author of *Stonewall Honor Book Like a Love Story*

‘Whether dealing with chronic illness, sexuality, therapy, education, faith, friendship, family, romance, or riding the bus, Fatima Daas’ *The Last One* takes on the world with honesty, humor, and lyricism. The specificity of life in the Parisian suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois underscores universal themes and utterly recognizable emotions. Daas bares her narrator’s soul, and we can’t look away.’

Eman Quotah, author of *Bride of the Sea*

‘Daas explores multifaceted identity through achronological slices of life, arrayed like glittering shards of a fractured mirror. An extraordinary debut novel you’ll never forget.’

Forsyth Harmon, author of *Justine*

‘*The Last One* is a thoughtful examination of a character who deeply wants to be known despite lacking the tools to do any of that self-examination. The work is tender and sweet, lyrically built, and reprises itself in fascinating ways. Who are we apart from our family? Can we face ourselves? Can we love? Fatima Daas asks these questions the way many of us do: plaintively, longingly, and with a tremendous amount of heart.’

Kristen Arnett, author of *Mostly Dead Things and With Teeth*

‘Fatima Daas’s monologue is constructed by fragments, as though she were updating Barthes and Mauriac for Clichy-sous-Bois. She carves out a portrait, like a patient, attentive sculptor...or like a mine searcher, aware that each word could make everything explode, and you have to choose them with infinite care.’

Virginie Despentes, author of *King Kong Theory*

‘Daas has chosen not to play the designated role of “the chick from the banlieue who made it.” All of this makes her path harder, as does her unwillingness to iron out the conflict she sees between her religion and her sexuality. This has made for a fine first novel.’

New Left Review

‘An absorbing exploration of sexuality and religion in the mainly Muslim Paris suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois, Daas’s debut is a nuanced tale of finding one’s place in the world fired by a desire to belong forged in one’s own truth.’

New European

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