

## Mate jaque

Mate check



**Author:** [Javier Pastor](#) [1]

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A professionally tortured writer –who’s also a drunkard, a misanthrope and a textbook degenerate– flees his life and takes refuge in a spa in Monegáster that’s seen better days. His third marriage has failed due to his wife’s maternal obsessions, the catalyst of his crisis and the whole story’s point of convergence. In Monegáster, the writer tries to reconstruct his past while strange events occur that slowly and almost imperceptibly reveal a disturbing process of alienation. The once lavish and illustrious spa transforms into a sinister place. A decisive chess game between the reclusive writer and an old maitre d’ reflects the horrific yet reversible reality the protagonist embodies.

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**Countries where the rights have been sold:**

Mate jaque

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**Additional information****Press reviews:**

(...)The author does not describe the characters; they flow like shipwrecked sailors on the current of their own soliloquies. The task of rescuing them is up to the reader –or perhaps better put, the re-reader. Javier Pastor’s literary offering is that of an artisan that hides his art and artifice from those who think of reading as an incursion into a new world; this is not an adventure novel but rather a book that takes on the adventures of the novel.

The hate that He and She exude –the book’s true subject–reminds me of a witty phrase by Juan Aranzadi: “The couple is the world’s first terrorist cell.” Mate jaque converts this pessimistic and disillusioned assertion into a stimulating artistic creation.

By Juan Goytisolo

El País / Babelia 07/02/09

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