



CHRONICLE OF THE RHINE'S RIVERBANKS

Genre(s):

- Novellas
- Supernatural

Keywords:

- Mysteries
- Ecology
- Tales and legends
- Citizens of the world

Audience: suitable for all audiences; fans of tales of the supernatural

Right sold abroad: /

Concept

The explorer Sylvain Tesson shows us an unexpected *terra incognita* through these ecological and fictional tales irrigated by a remarkable sense of the supernatural.

Universe and references

- Novel and film *La Vouivre* (Marcel Aymé)
- Play entitled *Ondine* (Jean Giraudoux)
- Canalization of the Rhine during the 20th century
- Ecological battles

Pitch

Sylvain Tesson tells us the tale of the old Rhine, whose banks hide a harsh world teeming with life. Listen carefully for footsteps or the splash of a selkie through the fog...

Love, disappearances, crimes, and secrets: a river of stories of all kinds flows through these pages.

Author

A geographer, seasoned traveler, and writer, **Sylvain Tesson** won the Goncourt prize for short stories in 2009 and the Médicis essay award for *In the Forests of Siberia* in 2011.

At a glance

- Short stories
- Word count: 41,000 characters including spaces
- Available material in English: this presentation (including an overview of the work's characteristics) and a translated excerpt

Excerpt

"The Rhine," I said, "So gentle, so slow..."

"It's romantic, my dear. This is where the Lorelei fell in."

A piece of meat in our soup: that is what had determined our holiday destination. Then again, she had some strange ideas that were undoubtedly the product of her slightly barbaric and obscure parentage. Her father, a Transdistrian bear tamer, had married a Circassian soprano from the Bachkiria opera, which explained her slightly slanted violet-colored eyes and her high, pronounced cheekbones which always gave her a predatory look when she smiled sweetly and an angelic face when she was angry. She had been born on a French tropical island where her mother sang a Maori translation of *Aida* for a group of savages that had been forced to come together by the local clergy.

The decision had been made. It would be the banks of the Rhine River. She sat down. She was always sitting down, everywhere, and at every opportunity. Her life was the journey between two chairs that fate had placed along her path. One had to admit that she sat prettily, nice and straight, with the delight of peoples that have walked a lot. Her ancestors had defeated the steppes, had tirelessly marched through the central plains. It was only fair that now she, daughter of nomads, might aspire to some rest.

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