

The Hammock and the Hummingbirds

My pen is my No — a novel by Karine Baridon · query letter

Dear [Agent's name],

I am seeking representation for *The Hammock and the Hummingbirds* (*Le Hamac et les Colibris*), a funny and moving novel about love, chaos and starting again, complete at around 98,000 words. It was written in French, and I am looking first to the English-speaking market.

Invited onto a TV set to talk about her own novel, an author looks back, with humour, on her past relationship with an ex she calls the Viking. Sharp, absurd dialogue lays bare the invisible mechanisms that drove them both, so that she can finally break free of the shock he left her in.

The novel has one central verb: *to create*.

Coraline meets the Viking: charismatic, unpredictable and... utterly chaotic. Between absurd road trips, a 12-metre camper van he calls his drak-car and parents who ring at every wrong moment, she learns to survive the chaos with humour. The story alternates between the past, the relationship as she lived it, and the present: a TV show, *Dimanche c'est Show*, where a journalist interviews the author... and the Viking himself. Not the real man, but the fictional character she created, who comes to give his own version of the story. It is a funny-sad book: every heavy moment is followed by a laugh, and creativity becomes a way back to freedom. In the final chapters, Coraline invites the reader to create in turn.

The novel will appeal to readers of *Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman, *Where'd You Go, Bernadette* by Maria Semple and *Everything I Know About Love* by Dolly Alderton, with the tone of *Fleabag*: a tender, funny voice that dares to be vulnerable. Like those three books, it lends itself to the screen: a TV series pilot script already exists.

The novel already lives online. At lehamacetlescolibris.com, all 47 chapters can be read for free, and the site extends the book with chapters read by the author, original songs, creative challenges, practical sheets and a gallery of readers' creations. The novel is funded by collaborative support and solidarity subscriptions, and a paperback edition is being prepared. All rights belong to the author.

The English version submitted here is a working translation that will serve as the basis for a final professional translation in collaboration with the future agent and publisher.

The author

I was an art director in France and in the UK, then a trainer and therapist. I have written communication and teaching materials, and published popular-science articles on neuroscience with Éditions Raabe. *The Hammock and the Hummingbirds* is my first novel, and I see it as the beginning of a body of work, not just a book.

Please find attached the first three chapters, a one-page synopsis, a chapter-by-chapter synopsis, the opening pages of the TV pilot script, and my bio.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Kind regards,

Karine Baridon · contact@lehamacetlescolibris.com · lehamacetlescolibris.com