BOOKS



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The Château of the Lunatics

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In France of the 1940s, a broken woman regains her equilibrium thanks to new psychiatric methods.

September 1, 1939. Jeanne, a young woman interned after the loss of her newborn, is part of a convoy of "loonies" from the Saint-Evrard asylum in the Paris area. The declaration of war has prompted their urgent evacuation to the remote Lozère region. There in the château of Saint-Alban a new world opens up for Jeanne and the other patients. No more confinement. Instead, the freedom to work according to their inclinations and abilities within an unusual community. A new approach to care is developed by a daring team of psychiatrists soon to be joined by the Catalan Tosquelles in exile from Franco's Spain. The château secretly opens its doors to members of the Resistance and to Jews...