Baglady



Novel by Christina Manolescu,
Illustration by Mary Fitzpatrick

Introducing
ASHLEY GRIMES
the classic single woman,
struggling to stay afloat in
the 20th century

RICH
FLUID
DESCRIPTIVE
LANGUAGE

MID
ATLANTIC
flavour, with shades
of Victoriana

DARK
HUMOUR
with a light
touch

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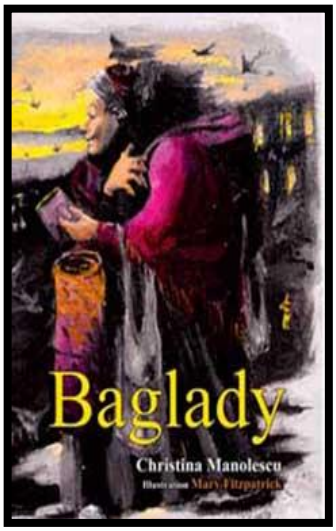
Baglady, the Novel

by Christina Manolescu

Short-listed for the Eastside Stories Competition, London, UK, 1998



Illustrated by
Artist Mary Fitzpatrick

In our society of precarious affluence, what is one of women's greatest fears? The 'Empty Nest'? Loss of a Life-Partner? Loss of Health? Loss of Youth? Loss of Beauty? The passing of Time?

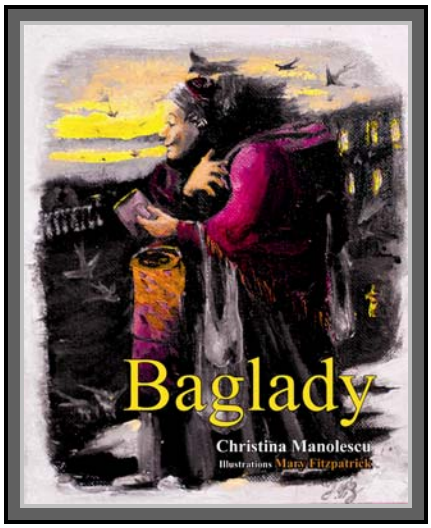
In the novel 'BAGLADY,' Manolescu trains a dark comedic spyglass on what she perceives to be THE archetypal feminine fear. Witness the many *'sans abri,'* the homeless, trudging our city streets in manifestation of our dread. 'BAGLADY' is the hilarious, yet somber process of warding off the 'Devil,' exorcising the 'Dread,' not necessarily voiced, but perhaps deeply and universally felt.

During the fictive winter season, when the plight of 'the homeless' shifts poignantly into view, 'BAGLADY's dubious heroine, Ashley Grimes, re-enacts the dreaded pageant via this quirky, modern-day morality play.

Ashley's loves, losses, triumphs, adventures and misadventures remind us that 'homelessness' can indeed 'befall' anyone. A rocky start in life, significant adversity, a trail of ill luck, illness of mind or body, can lead to the ultimate fall from grace.

Novel by Christina Manolescu, Illustrated by Mary Fitzpatrick. 280 pages, 6" by 9" paperback, 10 black & white illustrations, ISBN: 1-894967-31-3. List Price: $25.00 Canadian. Published by Prince Chameleon Press. 'BAGLADY' can be obtained via http://www.princechameleon.com and also http://www.InvisibleCitiesNetwork.org. Invisible Cities Network. For more information, please email: christina@princechameleon.com.

Who is BAGLADY?



- She is the Ashley Grimes in everywoman—my mother, my sister, my daughter, my neighbour, myself. My alter ego.
- She is the projection and embodiment of a primal fear: insecurity.
- As with all fears—the way to disarm them is to laugh at them, stare them down. The book, with its dark humour, seeks to shine light upon and exorcise that particular fear.

Behind all this—a wider reality—The Baglady Syndrome (almost a clinical condition today) which has been defined as an often secret, widespread, not totally illogical fear which can strike anyone at will. Although the subject matter is sometimes grim, in this novel it is conveyed through dark humour with a light touch!

What is the novel BAGLADY about?

Baglady is about ‘heroine’ Ashley Grimes, off to a rocky start in life, who does her utmost to survive. We follow her as she navigates the slippery peaks and hollows of life, until the final coup de grace when she finally does end up HOMELESS—along with a small society of squatters and their spiritual leader, Socrates of the Hemlock Club.

Why did I write BAGLADY?

Well—it's one of those transcending fears that can colour a lifetime: the **thing** out there at the end of the rainbow. The thing one is desperately trying NOT to reach. Well, it grasped hold of my imagination and carried me along. And here it is now: articulated, objectified, created in a book.

What are some of themes are explored in BAGLADY?

- **Fears, phobias, with special emphasis on 'The Baglady Syndrome'**
- **Homelessness in our affluent cities**
- **Religion, the occult, as well as 'New-Agey' modes of thinking**
- **The workforce, employment, security and the lack of**
- **Societal pressures and conformism**
- **Art versus Science, Social Activism**
- **The modern family, the female condition**

Each chapter ends with an 'aburdist' twist, often sending Ashley another notch down that slippery slope. Being downwardly mobile, she can move downward, sideways or out!



Reality Check

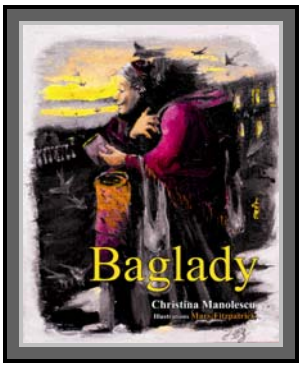
The Poverty rate for unattached women of 65 and older is 43 per cent.
The Poverty rate for unattached men of 65 and older is 21 per cent.

Quoted from SMART WOMEN FINISH RICH, Canadian Edition, David Bach

The novel, Baglady, by Christina Manolescu, is published by ***Prince Chameleon Press,*** *Montreal, Canada. For more details, please visit: http://www.princechameleon.com*

Reader Reviews of the Novel, Baglady

Author, Christina Manolescu
Illustrator, Mary Fitzpatrick



- Looks like another lively ride, *Iain Sinclair, Author of 'Downriver' London, U.K.*
- Very appealing, it's a memoir that bites back at its own history with every carefully crafted word. It deserves to be read, carefully and thoughtfully. This is literature. It will stand the test of time. *Trevor Lockwood, Publisher, Braiswick Publishing, Community Radio Host, Felixstowe, U.K.*
- Truthful, witty, her style is impeccable, *Raquel Rivera, Author, Reviewer, Montreal, Canada.*
- This darkly comic saga of loves and losses, adventures and mishaps chronicles anti-heroine Ashley Grimes's gradual arrival into a 'career' of homelessness and vagrancy. A memoir of disenfranchisement and defiance. Baglady is populated by a wild and eccentric cast of characters spanning the last decades of the 20th century, *Concordia University Magazine, Montreal, Canada, Autumn 2006.*
- A joy to read, *Kay Turner, Retired School Librarian, Montreal, Canada*
- What a wonderful book...Wickedly funny from beginning to end, a hugely astonishing yet believable cast of characters, chock full of devastating psychological insights and many scenes verging on the downright brilliant! I love it! *Angela Leuck, Poet, Publisher of Haiku, Montreal, Canada.*
- I just couldn't put it down, *Judy Isherwood, Publisher, Shorelines, Montreal, Canada.*
- What a tough, but varied, life Ashley leads! The detailed "word drawings" of characters and situations are quite remarkable and the poems...provide a stimulating beginning to each chapter. A very well-presented volume...I look forward to your next, *Joan Plunkett, Teacher, Actress, London, U.K.*

- It has tremendous energy, *Cecile Ghosh, Reference Librarian, Roxoro and Beaconsfield Libraries, Montreal, Canada.*
- Bravo for your wonderful book, *Manon Morin, Producer, Dialectes Program, McGill Radio CKUT, Montreal, Canada.*
- It is so witty, so captivating, yet seemingly effortless, full of humor and a way with words. I enjoyed the unexpected turns in the story, such a wonderful unique style. The artist truly captured the essence of the book, a prize-winning cover it is! *Leila Peltosaari, Publisher, Tikka Book, Verdun, Montreal, Canada.*
- I haven't stopped chuckling, I couldn't put it down; it's a gem, top class satire, and good to the last drop, a joy to read, *Jeannette Moscovitch, Culturama, Montreal, Canada.*
- Loved it! Jack Locke, *Writer, Poet,* Radio Host CKUT, *Montreal, Canada.*
- I'm loving your Baglady novel, a very enjoyable read! *Ingrid Style. Artist, Ste. Hilaire, Quebec, Canada.*
- It reads beautifully, and so funny!! Cristina *Perissinotto, PhD, Italian Studies, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada..*
- It takes me to new worlds, *Leslie Lutsky, Host Interviewer, Radio Centreville, Montreal, Canada.*
- Baglady's...cast of characters are still popping in and out of my imagination. Those people, who you so cleverly "flesh out", are great reminders of persons we have met or of others whom we can be grateful that we never met! An enjoyable, well-written story. Congratulations! *Maddy Cranley, Publisher, Montreal West Island, Canada.*
- A blackly comic novel...Grimes's saving grace is her wry sense of humour...which provides the novel with a disarming thread. Mary Fitzpatrick's soft, romantic illustrations add considerable charm, *Montreal Review of Books, Montreal, Canada, Spring, 2006.*
- I really *really* enjoyed your book. You are a very gifted (and funny) writer…the imagery is so textured and wonderful, *Gabrielle Maes, actress, singer, playwright, Singapore*
- A hilarious, finely written and ultimately disturbing tale of downward mobility in the late twentieth century, *Ann Diamond, Author of My Cold War, Montreal, Canada.*

- Certainly Ashley Grimes bears no resemblance to the perfectly appointed heroines of most modern writing but she touched my senses more nearly. She reminded me of a little girl whistling bravely as she passed so many graveyards in her inevitable march to the street. So many incidents made me laugh out loud but sometimes I felt the tears not far away…Original, fascinating…Surely a sequel is already in the works. *Christina Lundrigan, Newfoundland, Canada.*
- What a romp! Is there a sequel coming to that wonderful *BAGLADY*? *Len Richman, Teacher, Scholar, Author, Actor, TMI Institute, Montreal, Canada.*
- I absolutely enjoyed the book. The perils of Ashley Grimes are related with wide eyed, tongue in cheek wonder and make you laugh and cry at the follies of life. There, but for the grace...go I. *F. Tobin, British Columbia, Canada.*
- The main character has tremendous insights…how she fares in another world would be interesting. *Richard Tardif, Editor-in-Chief, Montreal Hype Magazine. Montreal, Canada.*
- I found 'Baglady' to be a thoroughly flowing read. The author's taste for summarizing people really shines through, *René Ghosh, PhD., Engineering, Paris, France.*
- I don't think I ever got a chance to tell you how much I enjoyed Baglady! It was wonderful, *Virginia Manning, Literature Student, Editor, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada.*
- It was a real joy to read. Truly appreciated, *Suzanne Charland, Programming Coordinator, Radio Centre Ville, Montreal, Canada.*
- I have been enjoying your book—it is very creative and engaging! *Andrea Paré, Writer, Journalist, Toronto.*
- The…writing style is…full of perceptive, clever and oh so witty metaphors, *Alexandra Delgado, Singer-songwriter, (Alexandra and the Herrings) Montreal, Canada*
- Throughout the novel, supporting roles are divine caricatures taken from daily life (mindful of Dickens) that make you want to pause and take a good look around at how eccentric many of us have become in this technologically fraught Millennium. Thumbs up for Baglady it's a grand slam success, *NAT Grant, Author of the Race Series, Montreal West Island, Canada.*

The novel, Baglady, by Christina Manolescu, is published by Prince Chameleon Press, Montreal, Canada. For more details, please visit: **http://www.princechameleon.com**

Prince Chameleon Press
Email: christina@princechameleon.com
Web site: http://www.princechameleon.com

BAGLADY

BY CHRISTINA MANOLESCU

Introducing Ashley Grimes, born-again Cinderella, whose adventures and misadventures we pursue. From her fledgling "drop-flight" from the family nest, we witness her valiant rise and fall—rise and fall—and inevitable descent into homelessness. The dark comic novel "Baglady" contains 9 chapters and approximately 66,000 words. Each chapter is preceded by a poem. Chapter 3 was short-listed for the Eastside Stories Competition, UK, in 1998.

Chapter 1. Ashley's COPEBOOK for Stepchildren

Teenager Ashley, about to graduate from high school, finds herself embroiled in her stepmother's fascination with the occult.

Chapter 2. My Room-mate Sleeps with the Angels

Homeless Ashley takes refuge with a saintly missionary, fervently intent on saving souls.

Chapter 3. The Company of Men

Ashley marries her own ‘Prince Charming’, gives birth to a priggish intellectual genius, and narrowly escapes disaster at the hands of a diabolical pair of medical researchers.

Chapter 4. The Second State of Single Blessedness

For Ashley, a spin at the roulette wheel of second chance romance.

Chapter 5. Fantasia

Ashley indulges her passion for romance writing and unwittingly becomes a partner in a shady literary agency.

Chapter 6. Peace & Love Inc., Revisited

Ashley turns nuclear peace crusader and meets Peace-Warrior Shayne, who wears the Doomsday Clock on his wrist.

Chapter7. Rise & Shine, Boys, This Morning We Speak-e the English

Ashley gets transferred to a remote military base, joins a labour dispute, and unwittingly becomes involved in a military "putsch."

Chapter 8. A Tale of Two Houses

Ashley buys a crumbling Victorian "castle" and gets involved in a dispute with her resident tenants.

Chapter 9. In the Shade of the Hemlock Tree

Homeless and jobless again, Ashley finds refuge in a decaying synagogue inhabited by the illegally squatting members of the Hemlock Club. Eloquent Socrates, their spiritual leader, tries to persuade his followers into "the ultimate escape" from their misery.

CHRISTINA MANOLESCU

Professional Bio



PUBLISHED WORKS, AWARDS

Christina Manolescu is a teacher, author, publishing consultant, editor and translator. Her published work, including non-fiction and translation, has appeared in local newspapers, educational and literary journals, technical publications, special interest newsletters, and closed captioning for feature films. Her self-published illustrated poetry and prize-winning fiction have appeared in print, on the web, and on cassette tape/CD under the imprint, Prince Chameleon Press:

http://www.princechameleon.com.

She has been guest visitor and panelist for various organizations and primary schools both in Canada and the U.K. to stage readings and answer questions about her work. As an active member of the Small Press Group of Britain, she helped organize their annual small press fair in Westminster, London, U.K.

After studying digital imaging, graphic design and pre-press at Rosemount Technology Centre, in 2001 she founded a Writers' and Self-Publishers' network, Invisible Cities, based in Montreal. Please visit the ICN web site:

http://www.InvisibleCitiesNetwork.org

BAGLADY INFORMATION SHEET

Author: Christina Manolescu

Title: Baglady

Name of Publisher: Christina Manolescu, Prince Chameleon Press

Telephone number of publisher: (01) 438-404-5706

Date of publication: Spring 2005

Price: $25.00 Canadian

Number of pages: 280 pages

ISBN: 1-894967-31-3 (10 digits); 978-1-894967-31-0 (13 digits)

Illustrations: 10 greyscale images throughout the book

Index: NONE

Bibliography: NONE

Brief description of the book: Literary Fiction, Humour

A finely written and darkly comic saga, populated by a wild and eccentric cast of characters; beautifully designed, with soft romantic illustrations; a feminine memoir of disfranchisement and defiance.

Awards: An excerpt from the novel 'Baglady' was short-listed for the Eastside Stories Competition, London, U.K., 1998.

Intended audience: General readership

Information on the author's background: The author is British/European by birth and Canadian by naturalization.

Book Distribution: Publisher's web site: https://www.princechameleon.com