

**Lipogramme (no 'e' version) of *États d'Âme d'une Femme Ordinaire***  
by Millie Niss from **News from Erewhon**

*L'humain XX un soir à la station SNCF*

Work stopping again, and it's trains, aargh, said Mylinda, as if Paris traffic isn't stop-and-go always? It is so awkward to look at angry union guys with signs pointing at you but all you want is an *SNCF* to go to Passy to buy farm food. All immigrants drunk on a cocktail of rums from Roumania, if that isn't an oxymoron, Mylinda spat by a forlorn "*Crachats Pas Ici*" sign right by incoming train track postings. I ask, Mylinda's brain said: now pink slips will hit all top pols, and not just Mr. PassBuck? Looking up at grimy windows on top of outgoing trains sign, Mylinda grunts. It was not as bad prior to national voting for a Right wing coalition again, and now, post-voting, *transformation, schmansformation*. Now, abruptly Mylinda was falling on a banana skin (that was what Mylinda will say to Baby about Mama's concussion at *la SNCF Nord*, got by walking on an old but still damp Trojan), and cut a tibia in half, improving dusk hours of a group of laughing young striking union guys for whom Mylinda was almost as funny as last night's ravioli ad, and how all night striking train guys say Big Boss did this and Big Pol did that and got mad and doubly mad, but as a sky graffiti aircraft was blazing by, with an ad for "Linguini For All," guys thought, Omigod, a silly falling bitch can lift gravity off our brows much as a hook on a truck lifts a floor's stairs off a hill of stairs, soon to add to suburban stacks of rising *HLM* housing blocks that poison our back yards with pot-smoking authors and sacrificing-ruminants-for-Id muslims, and all that crowd of sundry trash stuck down to official starvation status by gravity and a mass of rich folks pushing down from on top, much as a sack of spuds.

**Original Text:**

*États d'Âme d'une Femme Ordinaire*

Another train strike, said Melinda, as if Paris weren't slow enough already. It is so humiliating to be faced with angry picketers when all you want is the *RER* to Passy to buy some vegetables. All immigrants drunk on a mixture of rums from Roumania, if such even exists, Melinda fumed under the "*Défense de Fumer*" sign in the station. Maybe this time they'll fire the whole cabinet, and not just the Finance Minister. She looked up at the grimy windows above the departures sign, and sighed. It was better in Mitterand's time, and now, with each new government, *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose, déjà vu* all over again. Then abruptly she slipped on a banana peel (at least that was how she'd tell her daughter about the fall in the *Gare du Nord* caused by a used condom), and lacerated her knee, enlivening the evening of some laughing young striking cheminots who thought her the funniest thing since last night's ravioli commercial, and how they blamed the bosses for this and the government for that and got madder and madder, but as a skywriter blazed across the sky advertising "Linguini For All," they realized that one silly woman could lift the weight off their foreheads like a crane raising a prefabricated cement staircase off a pile, soon to be added to the unrelenting stack of the rising *HLM* housing blocks that were polluting the neighborhood with their poet tenants and sacrificing-sheep-for-Id tenants, and all those sundry lowlifes held down to the poverty level by gravity and the weight of all the successful people piled on top of them, like so many potatoes.