



## **In the Solitude of My Soul: The Diary of Genevieve Breton, 1867-1871**

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Originally published to glowing reviews and literary prizes in France in 1985, this revealing diary not only recounts the moving and tragic relationship of its author, Geneviève Bréton, with the rising young nineteenth-century artist Henri Regnault, it also serves as a valuable historical document concerning the social, cultural, and political life of the French Second Empire.

The young Geneviève Bréton began her journal in 1867 as a consolation for the death of her eldest brother, Antoine. She met Regnault soon after on a trip to Rome. Throughout the next four years of their relationship, Bréton eloquently describes the personal, cultural, and political turbulence that affected her life. Writing against the backdrop of France's fateful conflict with Prussia and the hardships and dangers of the siege of Paris and the Commune, Bréton, with innate candor and lyricism, creates a text that beautifully illuminates French art, literature, family life, society, and politics of the time. Her poignant account of her love for and engagement to Regnault reveals special insight into the life and mind of an extraordinary, though little known, literary talent. At Regnault's death in 1871 during the Franco-Prussian War, the expression of her anguish is as much testimony to the political and cultural disorder of the time as it is to her own personal tragedy.

Following Bréton's own instructions that she left before her death in 1918, this English version of the diary reincorporates material that was deleted from the French edition. Graced by rare photographs of the Bréton family as well as Regnault's paintings, the book contains a touching foreword by the author's granddaughter, Daphné Doublet-Vaudoyer. In its first English translation, it is a book for lovers of French life and culture, as well as students of French history; literature, and art.



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