



# My Traitor

*Sorj Chalandon*

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## **My Traitor** Sorj Chalandon

My Traitor tells the story of Antoine, an idealistic young French violin-maker, who takes a train from Dublin to Belfast in 1977 and is propelled into the heart of the Falls Road and the Republican movement, and Ireland's music, suffering and beauty. He meets Tyrone Meehan, a charismatic, high-ranking member of the IRA, who becomes his friend and mentor, and a symbol of the Irish struggle. As he increasingly identifies with his newfound home, Antoine leaves behind his life in Paris. Over the next three decades, from the streets of Belfast to the fields of Donegal, he witnesses the marches, the hunger strikes, the peace process, learning about bombs, prison, poverty and pride. In 2005 his world implodes when the IRA finally lay down their arms and Tyrone is revealed as an informer. An intense depiction of the nature of friendship and loyalty, and the emptiness occasioned by betrayal, My Traitor is a powerful lyric novel - an ode to Northern Ireland - paying an outsider's tribute to a wounded and extraordinary country. Acclaimed in France, My Traitor won several award on publication in 2007. One reviewer wrote: 'Why did Chalandon choose to write a novel rather than a documentary? Because fiction enabled him to go where he couldn't: to meet "his traitor" face to face, to look him in the eye and ask: "what about our friendship? Was that a lie as well?" We understand Antoine. We understand Chalandon. He doesn't falter. His book is a rugged account of a terrible beauty.' 'Terrible and beautiful.' Le Nouvel Observateur 'Fascinating.' L'Express 'A virtuoso novel, sharp as a knife, that takes us to the very heart of life and its inner struggles. An essential novel that is both burning hot and icy cold.' Madame Figaro 'The book catches, with remarkable atmospheric accuracy, the claustrophobic nature of life behind the barricades... As good an account of life behind the barricades in the worst period of the Troubles that we are likely to get for some time' Irish Independent

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