



Letter to D

A Love Story

André Gorz

Translated by
Julie Rose

'You're 82 years old. You've shrunk six centimetres, you only weigh 45 kilos yet you're still beautiful, graceful and desirable' – so begins André Gorz's 'open love letter' to the woman he has lived with for 58 years and who lies dying next to him.

As one of France's leading post-war philosophers, André Gorz wrote many influential books, but nothing he wrote will be read as widely or remembered as long as this simple, passionate, beautiful letter to his dying wife.

In a bittersweet postscript a year after *Letter to D* was published, a note pinned to the door for the cleaning lady marked the final chapter in an extraordinary love story. André Gorz and his terminally ill wife, Dorine, were found lying peacefully side by side, having taken their lives together. They simply could not live without one another.

An international bestseller, *Letter to D* is the ultimate love story – and all the more poignant because it's true.



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First published in French as *Lettre à D.: Histoire d'un Amour* © Éditions Galilée.

English translation copyright © Julie Rose, 2008

This English edition © Polity Press, 2009

Polity Press
65 Bridge Street
Cambridge CB2 1UR, UK.

Polity Press
350 Main Street
Malden, MA 02148, USA

Ouvrage publié avec le concours du Ministère français de la Culture - Centre national du livre

Published with the assistance of the French Ministry of Culture - National Centre for the Book

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ISBN-13: 978-0-7456-4677-0

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound in Great Britain by MPG Books Limited, Bodmin, Cornwall

For further information, visit our website: www.politybooks.com





You're 82 years old. You've shrunk six centimetres, you only weigh 45 kilos yet you're still beautiful, graceful and desirable. We've lived together now for 58 years and I love you more than ever. I once more feel a gnawing emptiness in the hollow of my chest that is only filled when your body is pressed next to mine.

I just need to tell you these simple things again before I deal with the issues that have been eating away at me for some time now. Why is there so little of you in what I've written when our union has been the most important thing in my life? Why did I give such a false image of you in *The Traitor*, an image that disfigures you? That book was supposed to show how my commitment to you was the decisive turning point that gave me the will to live. So why doesn't the wonderful love affair we'd begun seven years earlier really come into it? Why don't I say what fascinated me about you? Why did I present you as this pitiful creature 'who didn't know a soul, didn't speak a word of French, would have destroyed herself without me', when you had your circle of friends, were in a Lausanne theatre company and were eagerly awaited back in England by a man determined to marry you?

I didn't really achieve the profound self-analysis I'd intended in writing *The Traitor*. I still need to understand, to clarify so many questions.

I need to piece together the story of our love to appreciate its full meaning. It's what has allowed us to become who we are, living through each other and for each other. I'm writing to you now to understand what my life has been, what our life together has meant.

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