

—STEPHEN KING

The Church of Dead Girls

A Novel

STEPHEN DOBYNS

"A macabre version of *Our Town*... Dobyms's characters are superb and his sly arrows at bullies and bigots are right on target."
—THE WASHINGTON POST BOOK WORLD

"Tantalizingly sinister... Dobyms hooks us from the very first sentence."
—PEOPLE

"Stay as calm as you can. *The Church of Dead Girls* will carry you away."
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"Dobyms delivers the goods ...An intelligent and literate thriller that provides a burst of terror and plenty to contemplate long after we've regrettably turned the final page."
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DECONSTRUCTING BIBI

In "The Outsider" (May 25th) David Remnick discusses several factors that have significantly influenced Benjamin Netanyahu as Prime Minister of Israel, including his father's political philosophy, his brother's heroic death, his own outsider status, and his personal life. Remnick also mentions in passing that Netanyahu was "regarded as intelligent and diligent but not especially creative" in his Army unit. That comment rang true to me. As Netanyahu's faculty adviser in the Department of Architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, I observed that he was secretive, amazingly persuasive, extraordinarily hardworking, and superbly able to organize his time (he completed eight years' worth of study in four) but that his architectural designs, while reasonable and practicable, were not especially creative. I believe that that is why he left architecture for management. Creativity in any field, from architecture to politics, requires the ability to synthesize many seemingly disparate or contradictory factors and come up with a solution that resolves them all. Netanyahu apparently lacks sufficient creativity to devise a plan that will both allow him to come to a peace agreement with the Palestinians and enable him to retain his majority support in the Knesset.

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That Benjamin Netanyahu concurs with his father on matters of Jewish survival, that he smokes cigars at taxpayers' expense, that his wife exhibits habits displeasing to the left are all insignificant issues. As always in Israel, what's significant is the survival of the Jewish people and the preservation of their sovereign nation, and Netanyahu, by putting these interests first, seems to be on the right track.

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(May 25th) particularly apt. The American entrepreneurial spirit makes great achievements and the acquisition of fame and wealth possible, and gives people not only a first but also a second, and even a third, chance; failure is frequently followed by success. There is, however, a less appealing side to American capitalism: the rewards of success have become so grand and so visible that we judge our own and others' lives only by the level of economic and professional success attained. In France, by contrast, tradition is more important than efficiency, and, perhaps as a consequence, economic possibilities are much more limited. People don't seem to expect as much from themselves or the world; success is less grand and failure less devastating. Those American visitors to France who judge in terms of economic success and failure miss out on the simple pleasures of life that French people enjoy here every day.

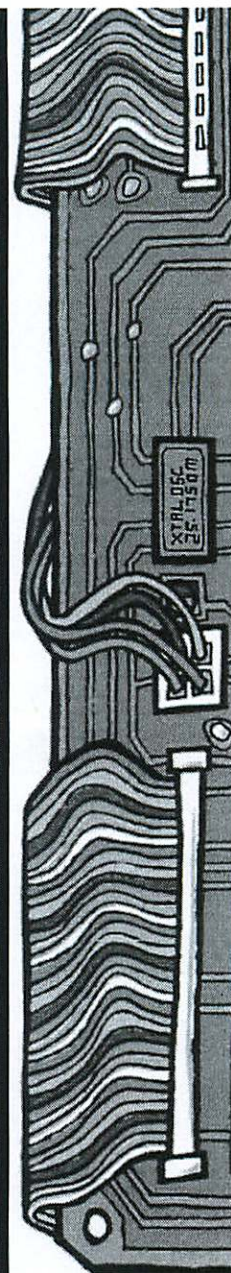
MARCUS BYRUCK
Aix-en-Provence, France

"The Art of Failing" brought to mind an old Jewish story about a man named Zusya who, moments before his death, had a revelation. "In the world to come," he said, "I shall not be asked 'Why were you not more like Moses?' I shall be asked 'Why were you not more like Zusya?'" What's at stake in the art of failing is not merely self-acceptance but also the acceptance of something much larger than ourselves.

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EDITORS' NOTE: In Alex Ross's "The Salzburg Fix" (May 25th) we gave an incorrect date for the beginning of the Salzburg Festival. The Festival will begin on July 23rd and run through August 30th.

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