

Gunstein Bakke

Expectant Havende

Genre: Fiction
Category: Novel
Publisher: Oktober
Year: 2016
Pages: 232
English sample translation available

Julia Pastrana, «the bear woman», was born in 1834 in Mexico, with a condition that caused extreme growth of body hair. An immediate sensation, she married an American impresario and performed in front of paying audiences all over the world. In 1860, the couple is in Moscow. Julia is about to give birth, but can still be seen every day at the circus. Public curiosity grows by the day: Will her child be covered in fur too?

In the late 1970s a shady character living on an Oslo garbage dump discovers a stuffed woman's body. He brings her home to have somebody to talk to.

In 2013, the journalist Kira travels to Sinaloa to attend the handover of Julia's remains to the Mexican state. Kira, expectant as a consequence of rape, carries a spawn of darkness.

Expectant is a dizzyingly inventive and tender exploration of birth and death, transgression and abnormality.



'Bakke's prose is unusually rich and precise, finely tuned and unmannered ... *Expectant* is the kind of book where you understand how much power and beauty can be found in language. How important literature can be.'

Adresseavisen

'Bakke's detailed tenderness sends this reviewer's brain into meltdown out of sheer enthusiasm'

Klassekampen

'Among this year's best. A brilliant novel (...).'

Adresseavisen



Photo: Christian L. Elgvin

Gunstein Bakke (b. 1968) made his debut with the novel *The Office* in 2000. His third novel, *Maud and Aud* (2011), won the EU prize and was shortlisted for the Brage Prize, the P2 Listeners' Novel Prize and several other awards. Bakke has also published a collection of poetry and edited an anthology on the July 22 attacks.

Foreign sales

Czech (Argo), Serbian (Heliks)

Awards

Winner of the European Union Prize for Literature 2012
Winner of Melsomprisen 2011
Nominated for the Brage Prize 2011
Nominated for the P2 Listeners' Prize 2011
Nominated for the Sørlandet Prize of Literature 2012

Previous titles

Maud og Aud. Ein roman om trafikk (Maud and Aud. A Novel About Traffic), 2011
Den indre olding (The Old Man within), 2005
Kontoret (The Office), 2000

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