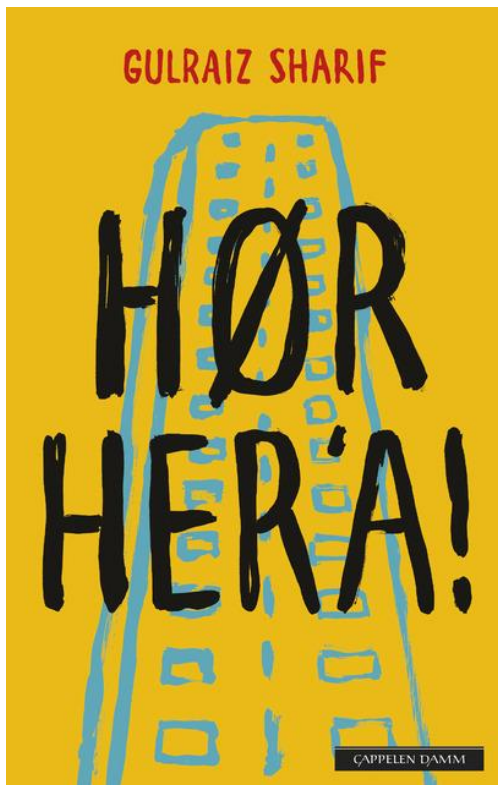


# Cappelen Damm Agency *Autumn 2020*



It's the summer holidays and 15-year-old Mahmoud pictures long days on the bench outside his block of flats. Norwegian Norwegians go off on their summer holidays, but what do penniless foreigners do?

All the same, though, this summer will be different because the family has a visit from Uncle Ji from Pakistan, and Mahmoud is given the job of showing his uncle around Oslo. Uncle Ji is amazed by Norway and then he starts to wonder what's wrong with Ali, Mahmoud's little brother – the one who plays with Elsa dolls and doesn't behave the way Pakistani boys are supposed to.

Before the summer is over, Mahmoud will be put to the test – both as the son and brother of his Pakistani family.

*Listen up!* is a firework of a novel. It renders a community of minorities in a truly original and distinctive voice.

*Listen up!*

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CAPPELEN DAMM AGENCY

**Listen up!**  
Gulraiz Sharif

Gulraiz Sharif

*b. 1984*

Gulraiz Sharif is from Oslo, where  
he works as a teacher.

Listen up! is his first novel.



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CAPPELEN DAMM AGENCY

**Listen up!**  
Gulraiz Sharif

HØR HER'A! (Listen Up!)

Novel by Gulraiz Sharif

Pages: 174

Summer holidays, right. Really nice for Norwegian Norwegians, but I tell you, not so great for us foreigners with no money! I mean, what's there to do? They have their sea cabins, mountain cabins, ocean cabins, mainland cabins, coastal cabins, and those ones the teacher told us about, yeah, archipelago cabins, man! Plus the Swedish cabin, you know, and the Nesodden cabin. Imagine that, they've got cabins practically in Oslo! Not that all Norwegian Norwegians come from Oslo, but when I heard that, like, I just about fell over. I mean, if you want an outside toilet, you just have to drive to the outskirts of Oslo. And then they stay there for weeks. Sit their white and pink bums down on those scary black holes, with a great pile of shit below. Those toilets, man, they scare the life out of me, give me a heart attack.

You want to know what I think, well: Bro, my dad didn't travel in a train and a container through Germany and Denmark, to Norway, to have a shit outdoors. In an outside toilet with wonky wooden walls. They look like they're about to fall down. He came to this beautiful, long country to shit indoors. If he was going to shit outdoors, I mean, we've got plenty, and I mean PLENTY of space outdoors in Pakistan. The problem is, there are poisonous snakes in Pakistan, man. In Norway, you've got those cute little adders, with little adder fangs. Gotta laugh, man! I've seen them hundreds of time when I go for walk around the lake at Grorud, to find myself, like, get some inner peace, away from my little brother and mum and dad. They're so not dangerous, not my family, like, the adders. They lounge around on the paths, totally chilled, they've got it good cos they live in Norway. The snakes in Pakistan would scare the balls off me. And anyway, I wouldn't be walking around a lake to find myself! Norwegians have taught us that. Pakistani parents take a sandal and whack you so hard that you can't find the door, so how the hell are you supposed to find yourself?

One time Dad slapped me hard around the head after I'd been for a walk round the lake, and asked: "Oi, Mahmoud, did you find yourself?" And I said, nah, you're joking, mate, by mistake, cos I wasn't really listening. And I promise you, bro, he asked my mum to get him the broom, and he said: "I didn't come to Norway so you could walk around in the forest and search for your soul all the time." I swear, after that I don't bother saying I'm going out to find myself, I just say I'm going out to meet a friend, though I don't actually have many friends.