Johan B. Mjønes

Spuria

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Genre: Fiction
Category: Novel
Publisher: Aschehoug
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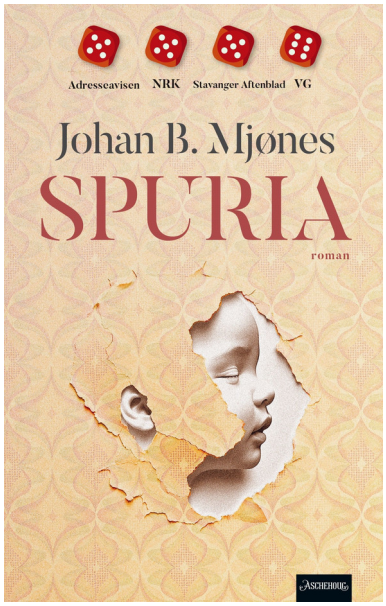
A novel about time, secrets, and the tyranny of gossip.

Kristin has turned 87, and there is no time left to feel ashamed, and no time left to hesitate either. When her husband of more than 60 years finally dies, she must find the child she gave up for adoption. In order to track down the little boy she gave birth to when she was only 16, she has to reveal what she has never shared with anyone. Why did she have to give up the child? And how has it shaped her life?

On the cribs in the maternity wards until well into the 1970s, a V for 'viv' (wife) was written if the mother was a married woman. If the mother was unmarried, an S for 'Spuria' was written, a latin word meaning false or illegitimate. Mother and child were marked from the very beginning.

Nominated for the 2025 Norwegian Booksellers' Prize



'Absolutely beautiful! Mjønes is an exciting author who has published several acclaimed books, but with *Spuria*, he should achieve a major breakthrough. [...] a well-written and important story about domestic adoption and the stigmatization of mothers and children as illegitimate.'

VG, 6/6 stars

'[...] The memories come and go, almost in a single sentence, in the same way that Jon Fosse can operate with time and shifts in consciousness in his books.'

NRK, 5/6 stars

'A beautiful novel about old age and longing. [...] A story about something as simple, complicated, and human as grief, longing, and love.'

Adresseavisen, 5/6 stars

Photo: Agnete Brun

Johan B. Mjønes grew up in Orkanger in the Trondheim Fjord and lives in Oslo. He has a degree in comparative literature and made his debut with the novel *Terminal Velocity* in 2009. Mjønes has published a number of novels, young adult novels, and children's books. In 2018, he received the Mads Wiel Nygaard's Endowment for his acclaimed novel *Home*.

Foreign sales
Azerbaijani (Sabat), Hungarian (Polar Könyvek)

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