Helga Flatland

Nowhere Fast

Så gjør vi så

Genre: Fiction
Category: Novel
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English sample translation available

Photo: Agnete Brun

Anton is in anger management therapy. Not because he wants to, but because he has to, if he wants to have any chance of shared custody of his sons. Something has happened, and if he wants to move on with his life, it has to be on his ex-wife's terms.

Ebba is trying to keep her family together while what once gave her life meaning is gradually slipping away. She is a feminist and a school marching band conductor, married to an uncompromising man, mother of two adult daughters who still need more than she can give.

Birgitte is a faded beauty and the marching band's jack-of-all-trades. Her children have moved out, her husband's enthusiasm is suffocating, and her body is changing. For the first time in her life, she feels invisible. Then she meets Anton.

Nowhere Fast is a novel about how power and powerlessness are negotiated in relationships. Through a microcosm of volunteer work for the marching band, dinners and everyday moments, the novel shows how we live in the tension between duty and care, defence and guilt, while the big things rage around us – and the little things still demand attention.

Nominated for the 2025 Norwegian Booksellers' Prize

'Hits the right note.' [...] Flatland has a unique ability to say something universal through the seemingly trivial, without becoming either pompous or sentimental. That is precisely what elevates Nowhere Fast from being a very good novel to an exceptional one.'

Bok365, 6/6 stars

'Exquisitely crafted. [...] The literary patchwork is impressively well sewn together, precise and aptly seen [...]'

NRK, 5/6 stars

'Should be on the reading list for couples therapy. Most people will probably recognise traits from their own relationships in this sharp and very funny novel.'

Adresseavisen, 5/6 stars

Helga Flatland (b. 1984) is one of Norway's most awarded and widely read authors. Her debut *Stay If You Can. Leave If You Must* (2010) received excellent reviews and established her as one of the foremost up-and-coming young Norwegian authors. She had a massive breakthrough with a broader audience with the novel *A Modern Family* (2017). Within weeks of publication the novel had sold 20,000 copies. Flatland's novels have been translated into 15 languages.

Of her trilogy *Stay if you can, leave if you must* the Danish Extrabladet wrote: "Each novel on its own is a stylistic masterpiece that could, but shouldn't be read separately. Together they form a phenomenal story".

Foreign sales
Danish (Turbine), Serbian (Geopoetika), World English (Orenda Books)

Awards
Booksellers' Prize
Tarjei Vesaas' First Book Prize
The Young Critics' Award
Aschehoug First Book Scholarship
Amalie Skram Award 2015
Mads Wiel Nygaards legat 2015

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Interview
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