

Jan Grue

Trying and Failing

Prøve og feile

Gyldendal 2022

368 Pages

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English sample translation and synopsis available

FICTION
NOVEL



PHOTO: MATHIAS FOSSUM

'Are you trying to ruin your life?' Hannah's friends say when she tells them she's having children with Magne.

Trial and Error is a novel about an almost completely normal couple. Like all parents of young children, Magne and Hannah have their challenges, but with Magne in a wheelchair even a trip to the beach at Huk turns into a gruelling odyssey. In spite of his master's degree in literary science, Magne has a poorly paid job as a hotel receptionist. But with his visible disability, he is at least a welcome expression of the hotel chain's benevolence and its diversity policy.

Magne and Hannah had intended to show the world – show the world that they could make it, show the world that it was possible.

But a lot can go wrong, and there are many ways to mess it all up.

Jan Grue (b. 1981) holds a PhD in Linguistics and is Professor of Qualitative Research at the University of Oslo.

His work deals with embodiment - with what it means to be a body in an endlessly complex world.

Jan Grue is the author of a wide-ranging body of work in fiction, non-fiction, and children's literature. He made his debut with the short story collection *Everything Under Control* (2010), which was received with glowing reviews. He has since published a further four short story collections, the latest of which is *Vexations* (2019). His first novel, *The Best of All Possible Worlds*, came out in 2016. Among Grue's works for children is *Oliver* (2012), a fantastical story about living wheelchairs. His academic books include *Body Language*, on the subject of the representations of disability in a cultural and socio-analytical perspective, and *Theory in Practice*, a primer on critical analysis.

His book of autobiographical non-fiction, *I Live a Life Like Yours*, was published in 2018 to critical acclaim. The book went on to win the Literary Critics' Award and was nominated for the Nordic Council's Literature Prize – as the first Norwegian non-fiction book in 50 years.



'With his novel "Trying and Failing", Jan Grue completes an exceptional trilogy about disability and vulnerability. (...) Masterfully, Grue exposes the illusion that we all, even in Norway, have something within our reach that even comes close to resembling an equal life. (...) Grue affectingly demonstrates how complicated challenges for the disabled can really be – and how deeply problematic it is to pigeonhole people.'

VG, 5 out of 6 stars

PREVIOUS TITLES

Selection:

If I Fall, 2021

Vexations, 219 (short stories)

I Live a Life Like Yours, 2018

The Best of All Possible Worlds, 2016 (novel)

Normalia, 2015

Oliver, 2012 (Children's picture book, ill. by Eivind Gulliksen)

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INTERVIEW

[Read our interview with the author here](#)