

Lotta Elstad

Xiania 1

Xiania - Klara

Genre: Fiction

Category: Novel (Vol. I in a trilogy)

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English sample translation available

Xiania is a burlesque, snappy and vivid feminist novel set in Oslo (then Christiania), 1922. Klara is 19, a housemaid, and pregnant after a very forgettable evening in a woodshed. After a nearly fatal attempt at self-induced abortion, Klara goes to a doctor who hands her a note with an address in the capital, Christiania (Xiania), and the password SOMETHING ELSE. Klara arrives to find a hat shop, believed to be a brothel, which in reality is an undercover cellar abortion clinic run by the mysterious Madame Zavarella. Klara gets the abortion and falls into a six-week-long half-coma, after almost dying from blood poisoning. When Klara is back on her feet, Madam Zavarella suggests that Klara stays. Klara, feeling she owes Madame Zavarella her life, accepts.

This marks the beginning of a whirlwind of events and characters. The rent Klara pays at Madame Zavarella is shockingly high, but is more than covered by the salary from the job she helps Klara get: A housing post with the bohemian and well-off Freddie. Klara enters the strange and fascinating milieu of 1920's Xiania: Revolutionary communists, the bourgeoisie and booze smugglers, from late-night dancing in the marble halls of Hotel Bristol, to the stinking sewage worker strikes in the burrough of Vaterland. And before she knows it, Klara finds herself entangled in affairs she never could have foreseen.

Xiania 1: Klara is the first book in this forthcoming trilogy, written in a fresh, snarky and contemporary tone.



"Not only does the author have a keen eye and a sensitive nose for the less appealing sides the urban life, she also has a downright poetic approach to the hedonism and zest that is often associated with the roaring 20's ..."

Vinduet

"*Xiania 1* is an unusually charming novel ... more than anything it's a story with great drive, told with bounce in its language."

NRK



Photo: Oda Berby

Lotta Elstad (b. 1982) is a writer, journalist, historian and non-fiction editor. She has since her debut in 2008 published several acclaimed books, both narrative non-fiction and novels.

Foreign sales

Denmark (Lindhardt & Ringhof - three book deal),
Hungary (Polar Egység)

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Interview

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