

## Olaug Nilssen

A Tale of Terrible Times

*Tung tids tale*

Samlaget 2017

150 Pages

English sample translation available

**FICTION**  
**NOVEL**



PHOTO: BENT R. SYNNEVÅG

It's a picture of Mum," you said from the back seat.

"Where's Mum?" I replied from the front seat.

You took a long time to formulate your answer, whether because your speech was in the process of disintegrating, or because you were searching for a poetic line.

"On the car's ear."

*A Tale of Terrible Times* is a powerful story about what it means to be the parents of a disabled child. And about the fight to allow the child to be who he is, and to get the support that he and his family need. The book follows the mother and son, and the rest of the family, day by day from the last Monday in November until the third Thursday in May. This is a story about the fine line between accepting and giving up. This is a moving story about love that hits like a fist.

Daniel loses his speech and changes personality. For his mother, Olaug, it is the start of a battle, first to understand what is happening to the boy, and then to help him get the care and resources he needs. The family suddenly find themselves in a lifechanging, challenging situation. There is a long and painful process shared in this novel written with deep human insight and love in the year Daniel turns 10 years old.

**The 2017 Brage Prize for best Norwegian fiction**

**The "Neshorn" (Rhinoceros) Prize 2017 awarded by Klassekampen**

Olaug Nilssen (b.1977) made her real breakthrough in 2005 with *Turn Me On, Dammit* (*Få meg på, for faen*). The book breaks taboos in relation to young people and sexuality and was defining for a whole generation. Since then she has written books in many genres and made her mark as an unusual and important voice in Norwegian literature. In the book and play, *Big And Ugly* (*Stort og stygt*, 2013), she deals for the first time with being the parent of a child that is not like the others. In *Tale of Terrible Times* she again breaks taboos with extraordinary openness about being the mother of a severely disabled child.

### FOREIGN SALES

Georgia (Academic Press of Georgia),  
Sweden (Albert Bonniers Förlag)

### AWARDS

The 2021 Fritt Ord Foundation Prize

### RIGHTSHOLDER

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OLAUG  
NILSSEN  
  
TUNG  
TIDS  
TALE

Samlaget

"Once again, Olaug Nilssen has shown herself to be one of Norway's sharpest literary voices. It is impossible to put *Tale of Terrible Times* aside unmoved."

*Fædrelandsvennen*

"This book is a brilliant love story and absolutely the best novel I've read about autism."

*Helene Larsen,*  
*Aspergerinformator*

"...shocking, important literature."

*Aftenposten*