



The One Needful Thing

Original title: Yt etter evne, få etter behov

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Genre:

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English sample

Foreign rights

Danish: Turbine

Dutch: Uitgeverij Oevers



Olaug Nilssen

Photo: Bernt R. Synnevåg

The One Needful Thing

Who will shoulder a responsibility that nobody can really manage?

In *The One Needful Thing* the reader gains insight into the daily life of an ordinary family that has ceased to be ordinary. Lea lies in bed playing Hay Day on her iPad and wonders whether she has chronic fatigue syndrome – she no longer has the strength to be a mother. Her sister Rakel, a dutiful person, balances along a tightrope in her role as the primary care provider for intellectually disabled nephew Benjamin. Their mother Gudrun focuses her time and energy on the youngest of the three sisters Linda, and her family. One day, Rakel is not home to receive Bjemain from a scheduled drop off after spending the weekend in respite care, and the rest of the family has to step in.

The One Needful Thing, nominated for the Brage Prize 2020, is simultaneously witty and serious. It is a continuation of the themes explored in *A Tale of Terrible Times* from 2017: Who will shoulder an impossible responsibility in the age of individualism? Can a balance be found between freedom and obligation, as community, family, and individual?

6 out of 6 stars: Intense and essential reading [...] One of the highlights of the autumn book releases!

Janne Bjørgan, BA

So ruthlessly and compassionately written that the reader gasps for breath.

DN: Bjørn Gabrielsen

Olaug Nilssen's latest novels are striking in their acute urgency.

Klassekampen: Tom Egil Hverven

Olaug Nilssen

Olaug Nilssen made her breakthrough in 2005 with *Turn Me On, Dammit*. The book broke taboos on young people and sexuality and was defining for a whole generation. She has since made her mark as an unusual and important voice in Norwegian literature, and covered several genres. *A Tale of Terrible Times* was awarded the prestigious Brage Prize in 2017. With this powerful story about what it means to be the parents of a disabled child, Nilssen established herself as a significant and influential political advocate.