



Animal Joy

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Animal Joy

Laughter shakes us out of our deadness. An outburst of spontaneous laughter is an eruption from the unconscious that, like political resistance, poetry, or self-revelation, expresses a provocative, impish drive to burst free from external constraints. Taking laughter's revelatory capacity as a starting point, and rooted in Nuar Alsadir's experience as a poet and psychoanalyst, *Animal Joy* seeks to recover the sensation of feeling alive and embodied.

Writing in a poetic, associative style, blending the personal with the theoretical, Alsadir ranges from her experience in clown school, Anna Karenina's morphine addiction, Freud's unfreudian behaviours, marriage brokers and war brokers to 'Not Jokes', Abu Ghraib, Fanon's negrophobia, smut, the Brett Kavanaugh hearings, laugh tracks, the problem with adjectives, to how poetry can wake us up. At the centre of the book, though, is the author's relationship with her daughters, who erupt into the text like sudden, unexpected laughter. These interventions – frank, tender, and always a challenge to the writer and her thinking – are like tiny revolutions, pointedly showing the dangers of being severed from our True Self and hinting at ways we might be called back to it. A bold and insatiably curious prose debut, *Animal Joy* is an ode to spontaneity and feeling alive.

[Animal Joy] is vulnerable, lyrical, and refreshingly incisive. ... Alsadir's quiet wit and depth of knowledge lead to unique insights and profound self-reflection.

Kirkus Reviews

'A genuine masterpiece. Nuar Alsadir's Animal Joy might be the best thing I've ever read on psychoanalysis and its deep connection to living a full, real, embodied life. Utterly compelling, radical, dizzyingly original, and beautiful, this is the work of a writer at the height of their powers.'

Rebecca Tamás, author of *Strangers*

Nuar Alsadir

Nuar Alsadir is a poet and psychoanalyst. She is the author of the poetry books *Fourth Person Singular*, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award in Poetry and the Forward Prize for Best Collection, and *More Shadow Than Bird*. She lives in New York City.