



Songs for Festive Occasions

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Stine Pilgaard

Photo: Alexander Banck-Petersen

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The novel is a web of stories about a group of people who are bound together by their shared tenant-ownership, communal work weekends, garden parties, and internet provider issues. The narrator is a writer of horoscopes and songs for festive occasions, and soon her neighbors throng her sitting room as anniversaries of various sorts approach: Granny and Ruth who got together in a landscape of cows and churches; Thomas who is married to an absent-minded scholar of Old Norse who spends her days in the Middle Ages; and Elizabeth who wants to have a song written for her husband Daddy-o's birthday despite the fact that he's been in a coma for the last two years.

Songs for festive occasions is a novel about a housing cooperative with a wonderful cast of characters, a tangle of stories all seen through the perceptive, humorous and affectionate eyes of the narrator. It's a novel about people who have edge, about nonstop chattering, about comfy boobs, about friendship, love and time. About a lone female bard who lived 700 years ago, about Soothsayer John who knows everything, and about drawing little devil's horns on the neighbours' baby scan picture. About being the only one wearing antlers at the Christmas party, about wishing you were your boyfriend's keys so that you would know yourself to be missed, and about resorting to singing whenever occasion offers: "A song for a festive occasion is by definition a success; one sentence leads to the next; people just sit there waiting for the next rhyme, I tell you; a song for a festive occasion is a gesture in and of itself – that's the great forte of the genre."

Stine Pilgaard

Stine Pilgaard (1984) is from Aarhus, Denmark. She attended Forfatterskolen, the Danish creative writing academy, and she has master's degrees in Danish Literature and Media Studies. *My Mother Says* (2012) is her first novel; it was nominated for the Danish Radio Novel Prize and won the Debut Novel Prize from the Bodil and Jørgen Munch-Christensen Literature Fund. She has since published two bestselling novels, including the 2020 bestseller *Meter i sekundet* (forthcoming in English with the title **THE LAND OF SHORT SENTENCES**).