



Starweed

Original title: Vassarv
 Publisher: Forlaget Oktober, 2023
 Genre: Novel
 Pages: 226 pages
 English sample

Foreign rights

German: btb
 Swedish: Bokförlaget Faethon



Inger Bråtevit

Photo: Signe Fuglestad Luksengard

Starweed

It's hot, and the house martins are swooping over Schweigaards gate and Oslo prison, over the stone sculptures, syringes, the prison wall, asphalt and cement; over picnics of kiwi and melon, over dandelions, willowherbs, and wild pansies. The house martins swoop over the ditch where the digger digs at the Hovin Stream. At Harald Hardrådes plass, bus 37 negotiates the roundabout and continues down the street. A goods train rumbles along the railway tracks laden with timber. Over Gamlebyen's school, Bispegården and the monastery ruins, the house martins swoop. They swoop along Dronning Eufemias gate, over the bridge to Sukkerbiten, the Opera and the Munch Museum, and the sign that says not to feed the birds. In Gamlebyen, in the courtyard, the girls sing at the top of their voices, and inside the play structure, in the little hut, sits my daughter.

A mother drives across the country, over the mountains from east to west, with her daughter strapped into the carseat in the back. For the daughter, the trip is a passage through endless hours and landscapes, for the mother, it becomes a journey in and out of contrasting times, to what used to be a home.

Starweed is a novel about being four years old, about wishing you had a pet, about discovering the world on your own – and about a mother's joys and sorrows at seeing her child grow up. It's also a novel about transitions in life, about the fractures we suffer in detaching away into lives of our own, in daughterhood and motherhood.

Bråtevit's story shifts subtly and powerfully between the everyday and the sublime, with keen and unfailing awareness of the brutal procession of our lives.

Inger Bråtevit doesn't shy away from fundamental existential perspectives and questions in her writing. In this sense, she assumes her rightful place beside authors like Jon Fosse and Jan Roar Leikvoll... In meeting with Inger Bråtevit, what excites me again and again is precisely the unique and fearless way her writing gives rise to richly figurative literature, and how her wide-reaching awareness of tradition evokes a sprawling expression of something classical in the midst of Norwegian contemporary literature.

Morgenbladet

This is poetic prose at its most beautiful, simply a gorgeous novel!

FriFagbevegelse

Inger Bråtveit

Inger Bråtveit is one of Norway's most exciting younger authors and the recipient of several awards and grants, including the New Norwegian Literature Prize and the Bjørnson Scholarship. She debuted as an author in 2002 with the novel *Mouth Towards a Frozen Fjord*. Her second novel, *Siss and Unn*, was nominated for the Norwegian Critics Prize for Literature in 2008. Bråtveit published her third novel *Alice A4* in 2015, nominated for the Young Readers' Critics' Prize. *The Art of Swimming* (2018) is a hybrid novel applauded for its wise and beautiful prose. *Starweed* is her fifth novel.