

Strange Happenings at Wild Lake

Kirste Paltto

Following several novels for both adult and teenage readers in recent years, Paltto has this time chosen to write for children. She has, once more, drawn from her treasure-trove of tales and adventure-stories which, together with elements of Sámi pre-Christian belief, form the basis of a novel that will stimulate children's curiosity and sense of wonder.

The main characters – Urban and Ritni – are camping out in a tent on their own for the first time. They wake to find that a strange girl, – Laksi – has come into their tent. They become friends and, together with Laksi, they leave the safety of their own world and step out into the unknown on the back of the great eagle, Alli. In Laksi's world, the two children encounter beings they have never seen before. Laksi's friend has disappeared and the children must face numerous challenges in order to try and find her. What has happened to Laksi's friend? Who has made the mysterious tracks? On the way, they are helped by various different beings in solving the mystery.

In order to receive this help, the children have to use touch as well as their own voices. They have to make up songs, stories and poems which they must then sing and recite themselves.

With Laksi's help, the two children, at first small and timid, start to believe in their own strength and ability, eventually experiencing mastery of even this alien world.

Written in a poetic and colourful language, Paltto has, with her latest novel, recreated and updated ancient myths in her own distinctive and inventive way, so that they also embrace today's children.

The book has been nominated for the Nordic Council's prize for 2017 in the "children's – youth literature" category. In 2020 the book was awarded with The Sámi Council literature price.



Luohtojávrrri oainnáhusat

November 2016 (original publication) • 80 pages • Novel • 9–12 years

Kirste Paltto grew up in the Tana valley in northern Finland and now lives in Rovaniemi. She became the first Sámi female author to be published with the release of her collection of short stories, *Soagju* (The Betrothal) in 1971. Several of her novels have been translated into Italian, German, English and Hungarian, in addition to the Nordic languages.

“Paltto has an ability to incorporate an understated humour into short stories that do not immediately lend themselves to it.” **Aftenposten**

“The author manages to connect the mythical with the real world, creating a story that holds the young reader's attention from beginning to end.”

Nordic Council