

The Hamburger Princess: You Only Live Once

Saia Stuong

This is a young adult novel which draws the reader into following the everyday life of Sámi youth. The author introduces us to Máren with a “You Only Live Once” (or “Eallá dušše oktii”) mentality, presenting both her positive and negative experiences.

The reader gets to experience how eating disorders can control a person’s thoughts and actions, and how something as ordinary as food can become a tool to cope with the challenges affecting one’s feelings. The author’s method of writing is both direct and sensitive, and contributes useful information to our understanding of how eating disorders affect young people.

“This was no ordinary evening. It was the last evening when everything was normal and safe. The evening when everything changed. My life changed and Mom became a stranger.”

Máren goes through what she’s been fearing for her entire life and has to decide whether she’s going to live with it or die. She gives life one last chance.

The novel challenges Sámi society to deal with topics that are difficult, but which we know are there, such as eating disorders, self-hate, same-sex relationships, trauma, sexual assault, and digital harassment. The book is an important voice in this day and age, not only demonstrating the specific challenges facing Sámi youth but also the universal challenges which young people meet when they demand a space for themselves in the world.

The book has been nominated for the 2024 Nordic Council Children and Young People’s Literature Prize.



Hamburgerprinseassa – Eallá dušše oktii

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• 192 pages • Novel • Young adults

Saia Stuong debuted with the novel *The Hamburger Princess* in 2017. *The Hamburger Princess: You Only Live Once* is the second book with Máren as the protagonist, and it can be read even without having read the first book.