



Gyldendal Norsk Forlag 2018
320 pages
Original title: *Nullingen av Paul Abel*

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AWARDS

Sæterbakken Memorial Prize 2018

OTHER TITLES

This Is How We Choose our Victims (2015)

Bjørn Vatne

The Deletion of Paul Abel

North-west Norway, mid-21st century: Norway is the only country in the world that has succeeded in building a network of deep, collective consciousness between its citizens. A layer of graphene a single atom thick around the cerebral cortex, also known as The Shell, allows them to experience exotic places, sense smells, and perceive people who aren't there.

The marine biologist Paul Abel detests this development, still swearing by the old-fashioned, handheld Shell. When Norway is subject to a coup d'état carried out by the eco-political party Pan-Ethical Alliance, he is one of the few who avoid being brainwashed.

He soon finds himself in a tiny apartment in Densetown, at the bottom of a hierarchy based on the idea of the Global Universe. His wife, Astrid, transforms into one of the state's most trusted servants, eternally faithful to Pan.

Paul intends to do something about all of this.

The Deletion of Paul Abel is a novel about finding your place in the ecosystem, about love, faith and scepticism, and the unbeatable energy of 1980s dance movies.

... an impressive, imaginative, linguistically inventive and entertaining novel about blind faith versus healthy scepticism, reason versus emotion, seduction versus persuasion, and about a public dream language and the false notion of the self, (...). 6 out of 6 stars

- Stavanger Aftenblad

Bjørn Vatne has written a disturbing narrative connecting two of the present day's greatest threats to humanity: pollution and surveillance [...] As a vision of the future, the book is a grippingly literate contribution highlighting these dangers – before it is too late. 5 out of 6 stars

- Dagbladet

*Bjørn Vatne's second novel is entertaining, smart and full of irresistible ideas. [...]. A clever plot, the strength of the wording and the power of his imagination make *The Deletion of Paul Abel* a real page-turner, a page-turner with substance at its core.*

- Aftenposten

Well written and terrifying.

- Hamar Arbeiderblad

A page-turner of intellectual challenges, with huge imagination in its language – and in its plot too, for that matter, in spite of the limited

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action. The character portrayals gradually grow out of their comical templates and draw generously from an understanding of human nature.

- Morgenbladet

Vatne has a linguistic energy and an outstanding sense for realism, faithful character depictions and good dialogue that make the novel function not only as an experiment in ideas, but also in literature.

- Klassekampen

Thought-provoking and interesting future dystopia...

- VG

There are many dystopias in the bookcases at the moment; many of them are Norwegian. There is, unfortunately, an abundance of warning signs that authors are taking seriously. Bjørn Vatne, however, has not just written an important novel – for me, the book is just as much an impressive creative work.

- Dag og Tid

Bjørn Vatne

Bjørn Vatne (born 1976) comes from Ålesund. He debuted in 2015 with his novel *This is How we Choose our Victims*, which was selected as Book of the Year by Norwegian book bloggers. His second novel, *The Deletion of Paul Abel*, was published in 2018 to unanimous acclaim from the critics. Among other things, Vatne read sociology and media studies at the University of Bergen and spent two years doing a writing course at the University of Tromsø. He has published texts in *Vinduet* literary magazine and in *Granta*, worked for several years as a journalist, and is currently a freelancer writing on culture in Ålesund.

