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Gyldendal Agency
P.O. Box 6860 St. Olavs plass
NO-0130 Oslo
Tel: +47 957 81 640
foreignrights@gyldendal.no
<http://eng.gyldendal.no>

Ida Lødemel Tvedt

Drafts from The Mariana Trench *An Essay in Forty-Three Acts*

An essay on contemporary literature and the spirit of our times

Drafts from The Mariana Trench is an essay in forty-three acts, about literature and the spirit of the times, about resentment and desire dressed up as ideology, about enthusiasm, rage and love, about cockroaches, milk and makeup, about culturalcritical poses and the role of confession in Public life. The story begins with a choir of Norwegian children longing for transgressive experiences, oceans and whales.

From there we travel through a world that is at times cold and disillusioned, at times mild, kind and jolly. The essay moves between Norway and New York, in the company of contemporary writers like Anne Carson, Maggie Nelson, Claire-Louise Bennett and Lars Amund Vaage, while the oeuvre of Dolly Parton and Louis C.K. is explicated as eagerly as the writings of Agnar Mykle and Simone Weil. Chapters shift between differing essayistic modes, from portraits and interviews, to street wanderings and monologues.

There aren't enough books like Ida Lødemel Tvedt's debut Drafts from the Mariana Trench being written in this country [...] It's good company – a conversation partner, a companion in the form of a book. At its best, it's also a perceptive friend to learn from.

- Aftenposten

Tvedt is at her best when the text cools down and there is more space for discussion and reflection, such as when she delivers sharp jabs at American bestsellers, and when she analyses Trump's former chief strategist Steve Bannon in light of the film Titus, which he himself co-produced.

- Bergens Tidene

There is a soaring in Ida Lødemel Tvedt's debut, and a flexible understanding of what it means to feel at home.

- Morgenbladet

There is no getting away from the fact that the uncompromising brainwork Tvedt practises here is impressive, and at times almost exemplary – not least because she, to the extent that she is herself dogmatic, is quick to recognise herself as such.

- BLA

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Ida Lødemel Tvedt's essay debut may be many things, but first and foremost it is staggeringly good.

- Vårt Land

Such writerly sensibilities are made for the essay genre, which, according to theory, should be procedural, ambling, dialogic and open – characteristics that suit Tvedt's agile prose well.

- Klassekampen

[...] Dolly Parton is referred to as a “philosophical role model”: “Dolly Parton is the high-priestess of bimbo metaphysics,” writes Lødemel Tvedt, quoting a few verses from the Queen of Country Music's brilliant song, Backwoods Barbie. This is a must-read.

- Dagbladet

Ida Lødemel Tvedt

Ida Lødemel Tvedt (b. 1987, in Norway) is a critic for the Norwegian daily newspaper *Klassekampen*, and co-editor of *Vagant*, a Scandinavian literary journal. She has taught classes on the literary essay at The New School and Columbia University. *Drafts from the Mariana Trench* is her first book.

