



Zeshan Shakar

## Yellow Book



Mani is a recent economics graduate and has just got a job at the Ministry of Childhood and Adolescence. He's a young man who lives with his father in an apartment in Haugenstua, a 1960s tower-block development in north-eastern Oslo, and he has a girlfriend he thinks he's going to marry. He would have preferred to put his skills to use in the private business sector, where prestige and money count, since he is painfully aware that both his girlfriend and the environment around him only see the "public sector" with disdain. It doesn't pay well either.

His new working life implies adjusting to a new set of values in which an old apartment in the city's old town is coveted more than Mani's new, expensive apartment in Skillebekk, and in which Mani's regular kebab shop is "genuine" and ranks higher than the Theater Café. At the same time, Mani becomes a proud contributor to the great common project called The State.

**Yellow Book** is a novel about class and belonging, about the lives we live and what frames them. It is also a tale about where we come from and where we're going. It's a long way from Haugenstua to the heart of government.

*Read it in a single sitting! [...] Zeshan Shakar reveals himself to be that rarest of writers: He takes an abundance of material from disparate cultures, fixes a keen eye on his surroundings, and writes with humour, sincerity and warmth.*

- VG, 6 out of 6 stars

*An exceptional storytelling talent. [...] With Yellow Book, Shakar proves that Our Street was by no means a fluke, but rather the beginning of a writing career that grows ever more promising."*

- Bergens Tidende, 5 out of 6 stars

*Brilliant! Zeshan Shakar's Yellow Book is so vivid. It's about working life and changing one's surroundings, about "us" and "them" and what it means to belong. About love of one kind or another, and about friendship. The 'difficult second novel' has proven not to be so difficult after all. Kudos!*

- Dagsavisen

*Zeshan Shakar is only just starting out as an author, but the scenes he writes are elaborate depictions of a reality that is never less than ambiguous.*

- NRK

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*One theme radiates throughout Yellow Book. Its most heart-rending thread, about the consequences of growing up as an outsider, puts politicians' fine words about diversity and equal opportunity to shame.*

- Vårt Land

*With simple ironies and an absence of grand gestures, Zeshan Shakar writes powerfully about self-awareness, ambition and disillusion.*

- Klassekampen

*...funny, gripping and to the point*

- BLA

## Zeshan Shakar

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Zeshan Shakar (b. 1982) was born and raised in Stovner. For his first novel, *Our Street* (2017), he was presented the Tarjei Vesaas debutant award.

He is a qualified political scientist and has also studied economics at the Norwegian Business School (BI). Shakar has worked in various ministries and directorates, and now works at Oslo City Hall.

