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Refractions is available for translation rights.
The complete manuscript in English
translation is available upon request.

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Refractions

Refractions takes its title from the phenomenon by which a ray bends as it passes from one medium into another, splitting into its constituent colors, revealing what was always present but invisible. Each story is precisely that: a moment of pressure at the boundary between two worlds, two selves, two truths that do not cancel each other out.

Published in Norway as *Brytninger*, the collection received exceptional critical acclaim upon publication, praised for its extraordinary range, its intellectual ambition, and its prose. The stories are arranged musically, each a movement in a larger composition, the voices accumulating, the themes deepening.

From Medusa to the Mona Lisa to the nameless skeleton with a brick in her jaw, the collection runs a continuous, quietly furious argument about who controls the narrative, who frames the image, and who gets punished for gazing.

Caravaggio appears in three stories; Titian and the Venetian tradition in several more, because the collection is fundamentally concerned with what great art costs, what it is made from, and whether beauty can ever be separated from the cruelty that sometimes generates it.

Characters in 1595 Venice and characters in the present day are subject to the same pressures, make the same bargains, suffer the same specific variety of damage.

The collection refuses the consolation of historical distance.

Among the most chilling, witty, and compulsively readable short fiction I've encountered in years.

- Goodreads

What a sheer delight it is to encounter historical figures such as Medusa, Caravaggio, Dante, Casanova, and many more brought vividly to life.

What a literary feast this turned out to be!

- Tine Sundal

"Without a doubt the finest short story collection of the year."

- Randaberg24

"Brytninger is a short story collection in which the author ventures into the uncertain and shadowy terrain of her protagonists' inner worlds — figures who actually lived, who crossed paths either in recorded history or in the realm of classical mythology."

- Det italienske kulturinstitutt i Oslo

A splendid collection of short stories by Tonje A. Lissandrin. The short stories are intriguing, exciting, well written – some times both dark and quirky and/or funny and macabre and erotic and what not. Deserves to be read. Thus I hope there are – or will be – translations available.

- Lundh Literature

While reading, it is almost as though you can smell the soil in your nostrils and feel the moisture rising on your skin. More than once I found myself caught off guard by the cunning twist near the end of each story.

- Nina Leser

The book is superb!

- Librarian Unni Breen Vinge

Author Tonje A. Lissandrin has walked a remarkable path.

- Journalist Morten Haugseggen, Newspaper Fjell-Ljom

Tonje A. Lissandrin

Norwegian author and scientist, contributor to the Norwegian Encyclopedia, interviewed on her authorship in Samtiden, Norsk Ukeblad and Tara among others — who earned an MBA with honors in London and now lives in Venice, Italy.

Samtiden 🔍 🗨️ ☰



It was during her work on tuberculosis research at Boston Medical Center, that Professor Umberto Eco convinced her that a scientific mind need not be a cage, and that she too could become a writer of fiction.

It was September 11th 2001 when she wrote her first sentence. Boston had been evacuated. The streets lay hollow and forsaken. She took refuge in Newbury Comics at the far end of Normality, and there, in that strange suspended stillness, she put pen to paper — not as an act of creation, but of survival. Since then, she wrote “Red Zone-pandemic poetry” and “ Tales From A Waiting Room”.

She has published several short stories in magazines and anthologies, and won two writing contests in Norway. Refractions is her latest short story collection.

Tonje A. Lissandrin