Brightly Shining

by Ingvild H. Rishøi



A Modern Classic

Norway – Gyldendal



The Norwegian edition of *Brightly Shining* hit the shelves in Norway on November 1st, 2021, and **immediately entered** the official list for bestselling hardcover fiction. The book stayed in the **top 15** for **nine consecutive weeks** – an amazing feat!

The paperback edition was published less than a year later, and was also immediately a huge success sales wise, with **multiple** weeks on the Norwegian paperback lists.

Plassering			Forrige uke	Antall uker
↑ 2		**Stargate** Ingvild H. Rishøi Gyldendal 9788205539334	6	4

What's more is that *Brightly Shining* was one of Norway's bestselling novels of 2024, securing an **impressive #24** spot on the Norwegian Publisher's Association's annual bestseller list. As you may remember, the book also saw an astonishing **eight reprints** in 2024 alone. The book was also the **#1 bestselling** fiction title written by a woman in all of 2024.

Given that the book was originally published in 2021, this achievement is truly extraordinary and a testament to its enduring impact and popularity.

BOKHANDLER-FORENINGEN

Den mest solgte norske romanen skrevet av en kvinne, var ***Stargate*** av **Ingvild H. Rishøi**. Den mest solgte norske barneboka var ***Felix har følelser*** av psykolog og forfatter **Charlotte Mjelde**.

Norway – Awards

Even before its publication, *Brightly Shining* was nominated for the prestigious literary award, **The Brage Prize**, the same award Ingvild received for her short story collection *Winter Stories* back in 2014. *Brightly Shining* was nominated along side three other titles, and here is an excerpt from the jury's motivation:

"Every sentence and every exchange of lines has been worked through to the smallest detail, still keeping the energy of the story. Every single character in the pre-Christmas drama are distinct, but not one-dimensional, before us in a story which is both a personal drama and a kind of contemporary societal diagnosis. This could have been Charles Dickens's London or H.C. Andersen's Copenhagen almost 200 years ago, but it is Oslo and Norway today."



At the end of December 2021, it was announced that *Brightly Shining* had been awarded the Norwegian newspaper *Klassekampen's* literary award, **Neshornprisen**, with the motivation that it is **'pure Christmas magic'**.

In August 2022, the **Amalie Skram-award** was given to Ingvild H. Rishøi. The prize is awarded to a Norwegian, female author, who writes in Amalie Skram's spirit. The jury said that "With Ingvild H. Rishøi's texts we get to exercise our empathy muscle to our benefit. Rishøi beautifully portrays how wonderful life can be in those moments where we give something from ourselves to others, and why people need other people."

Norway – Film Adaptation

Shortly after the book's release, it was announced that a **film adaptation** of *Brightly Shining* was underway. The film is set to premiere in Norway in October of this year.

At the helm of the production is director Ida Sagmo Tvedte (*Stjernestøv, Sol, snart seks*), who has also written the manuscript alongside Ingvild H. Rishøi. The roles of Melissa and Ronja will be brought to life by actors Anna Drakopoulou Sverrirsdóttir (*Dagsvaktin*) and Luiza Idrizi, marking her acting debut. The film is produced by Motlys.













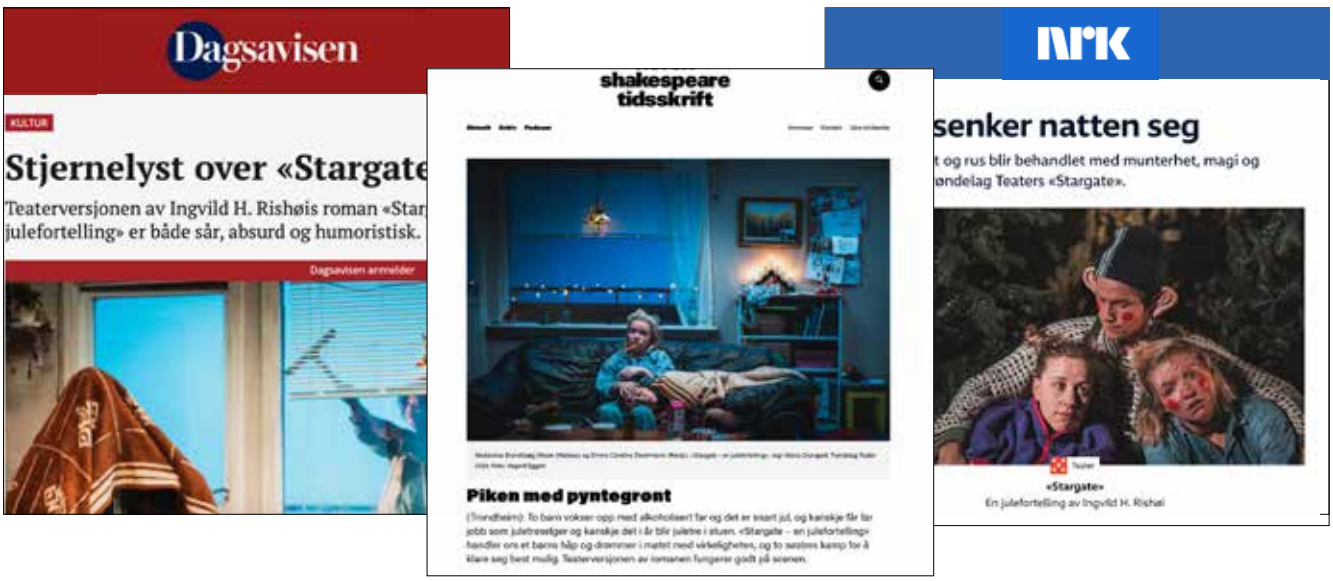
Norway – Theatre Adaptation

In November 2024 a **stage play adaptation** of *Brightly Shining* premiered at Trøndelag Theatre in Trondheim. It received outstanding praise from several important newspapers and magazines:

"*Brightly Shining* has a captivating lightness about it, like snowflakes swirling upwards, with a lovely musicality and a distinct rhythm from the actors that draws us into the story. Beneath this lightness, however, lies an underlying darkness. This theme is brought to life through inventive scenic design and magical realism, or, rather, magical absurdism, as its driving force. [...] Ida Grimsgaard's stage design and Christmas tree costumes are a spectacle in themselves, beautifully complemented by Steffen Telstad's atmospheric lighting and integrated effects."
– *Dagsavisen* (NO)

"The novel translates well to the stage. [...] Emma Caroline Deichmann and Madeleine Brandtzæg Nilsen, as the sisters Ronja and Melissa, carry the show. They portray hope and despair, joy, dreams, grief, and hardship with power and conviction, transforming Brightly Shining into a vibrant experience."
– *Norsk Shakespeare Tidsskrift* (NO)

"Rishøi's novel thrives on stage. Maria Drangeid, who has both dramatized and directed the story, has transformed it into something theatrical and magical. [...] Drangeid has skillfully captured the essence of Rishøi's novel in Ronja's lines; they are beautifully crafted, echoing the book's tone in an impactful way."
– *NRK* (NO)



Norway – Reviews

The reviews for *Brightly Shining* quickly started to **pour in** after its publication and an **unanimous** corps of critics hailed the book as a **must read.** Here are a few highlights:

"[...] There is still a need for secular gospels adapted to our time and social conditions. *Brightly Shining* deserves to be read by many, preferably annually, when the Christmas season approaches."
– *NRK* (NO)

"Ingvild H. Rishøi performs an extraordinary balancing act with the novella *Brightly Shining*. Through ten-year-old Ronja's eyes, the author portrays a tragic upbringing – but with the help of Ronja's lively imagination she succeeds in turning the novel into a magical Christmas story. [...] With *Brightly Shining*, she impresses again."
– *Dagbladet* (NO)

"Rishøi writes in an oral, natural style, that she has perfected in her short stories. Every sentence is thoughtful. The novel is subtle, smart, hopeful and sad, with a healthy dose of wisdom and an ending that opens up for the light. Even though it is about neglect, the child's hope and optimism is at its core. Is this a novel that is solely for adults? No, it is a book that suits everyone from the age of ten to 120."
– *VG* (NO)

"*Brightly Shining* is everything a Christmas story should be. Stars and blizzards. Lucia and gingerbread cookies. Humor, hope and joy. Real Christmas magic, in wonderful dazzling language. Just remember the tissues when you read."
– *Dagsavisen* (NO)

"*Brightly Shining* is an incredibly strong sibling portrayal, which leaves a lasting impression on the reader."
– *Klassekampen* (NO)

"*Brightly Shining* is a timeless Christmas tale that lingers. It is a painful, but also hopeful, cozy, and magical novel. It's about having faith in the good in us, and seeing those who need someone, maybe especially now in time for Christmas. Those who don't have 20 guests to invite for Christmas, or who can't afford ribs. My new tradition will be to read this as the nights become longer. Because even when it's at its darkest, the hope and the light are never far away."
– *DN Magasinet* (NO)

"This is such a beautiful story, carried by Ingvild H. Rishøi's distinctive language."
– *Tara* (NO)

Norway – Reviews


DNMagasinet

D2 Smak

Så bra at jeg blir helt tullete


ANMELDELSE

Et sekulært evangelium for vår tid

Når det gjelder å skildre dem som er helt nederst, er Ingvild H. Rishøi fortsatt helt øverst.

Knut Hoem
Litteraturkritiker

Publisert 4. nov. 2021 kl. 11:29
Oppdatert 4. nov. 2021 kl. 12:46


Anmeldelse: Ingvild H. Rishøi, «Stargate. En julefortelling»

Leverer rein julemagi

Det drysser juleglitter av Ingvild H. Rishøis nye bok om en teff barndom og ei juletid vi seint vil glemme.




En nydelig julefortelling

Rishøis varme historie om livsvilkår i Norge i dag gir assosiasjoner til de mest klassiske julehistorier.

Ingvild H. Rishøi har markert seg som en av landets mest begavede novelleforfattere, men hun er ikke blant de mest produktive.

FAKTA
Stargate




Stor oversikt: Disse bøkene vil prege bokhøsten 2021

Nå starter høysesongen for norske bokutgivelser. Aftenpostens bokredaksjon har merket av 20 norske titler som kommer til å prege høsten.


FØRSTE ROMAN: Ingvild H. Rishøi (43) har markert seg som en prisbelønt novelleforfatter – og i 2014 vant hun Brageprisen for «Vinternovellen». Nå har hun skrevet sin første roman. Foto: Hans Fredrik Asbjørnsen

Årets julefortelling! Bokanmeldelse: Ingvild H. Rishøi: «Stargate»

Brageprisnominerte Ingvild H. Rishøi, har skrevet en julefortelling for vår tid, tydelig inspirert av H. C. Andersens klassiker «Piken med fyrstikkene».

Sweden – Flo Förlag



The Swedish edition of *Brightly Shining* was published simultaneously on November 30th 2021 by Flo Förlag. Just like in Norway, the book immediately debuted on the Swedish **bestseller lists**, where it stayed on the official hardcover list for **seven consecutive weeks.**

Not long after its publication, *Brightly Shining* entered *Dagens Nyheter's* critics' list. The book stayed on the list for **8 consecutive weeks**, with a top placement at **#1**. *Dagens Nyheter* is one of Sweden's largest newspapers and to be featured on their critics' list is a great achievement.

The paperback edition of *Brightly Shining* was published in November of 2023, and managed to secure the **top spot** on the **official list** for bestselling paperback fiction.

The book also claimed the **#1 spot** on Akademibokhandeln's list over bestselling paperback fiction for several weeks.

SVENSKA FÖRLÄGGARE FÖRENINGEN

SVENSKA BOKHANDLARE-FÖRENINGEN

Plats	Författare	Titel
1	Rishøi, Ingvild H.	*Stargate : en julberättelse*
2	Perrin, Valérie	*Färskt vatten till blommorna*
3	Sten, Viveca	*Botgöraren*



Sweden – the Dobloug Prize

In May of last year it was announced that Ingvild had been honored with the **very prestigious Dobloug Prize.**

Awarded annually by The **Swedish Academy**, the Dobloug Prize recognizes two Swedish and two Norwegian authors for their contributions to literature, where each recipient receives 200,000 Swedish crowns. Ingvild accepted this very **fine award** during the opening ceremony of the Norwegian Literature Festival in Lillehammer 2024.





Sweden – Reviews

The Swedish critics **loved** *Brightly Shining*, calling it **"deeply moving", "captivating"** and **"a modern classic".** Check out the rave reviews below:

"A thin little novel of 148 pages with content as heavy as lead. The portrayal of two sisters' attempts to survive Christmas is masterful, inescapable and deeply moving."
– *Aftonbladet* (SE)

"[The book] looks so thin and innocent, very beautiful. But it's a real sucker punch. I read until it ended, there were no other options. Little Norwegian Ronja tell us about her life, which she has decided to get through. If only dad gets a job, if only dad keeps his job, if only dad avoids getting stuck at the Stargate pub. Big sister Melissa's hope is weaker, but she doesn't give up. Who can afford to do that? A story from Oslo that few of us are familiar with."
– *DN Kultur* (SE)

"Ingvild H. Rishøi doesn't lose control for even a second. Her reins are tight, the words are exactly where they ought to be, the author keeps the story close to herself and feeds it with what little is needed for it to grow in a pace that makes you receive it almost organically. Rishøi makes her vulnerable and tender Christmas story grow into the reader and take place there with ease."
– *Dagens Nyheter* (SE)

"*Brightly Shining* has, with its finetuned and striking meditation on the sparkling Christmas dream – and for many icy reality – all the makings of a modern classic in its genre. Rishøi makes Ronja and Melissa timeless heroes in their search for a Christmas where the adult world's ruthlessness, chaos and short-lived sparks of benevolence no longer set the limits."
– *Expressen* (SE)

"The many references, not only to the world of children's books but also biblical stories, could easily weigh down such a short story as *Brightly Shining*, but they never do. Ingvild H. Rishøi doesn't let anything stand in the way of the story about Ronja and Melissa, a story she tells with the utmost gravity and warmth, and with a language that is so pared down and life-adjacent in every single sentence. [...] *Brightly Shining* is not only one of the most captivating reads this year, but also the most heartfelt Christmas novel I've come across. Magical – and dark as night."
– *Svenska Dagbladet* (SE)

"I am not going to be ashamed to say that I cried like a child, or rather just like an adult woman, when I read Ingvild Rishøi's *Brightly Shining*, because it is in every true sense of the word, fabulous."
– *Babel SVT* (SE)

Sweden – Reviews



Osentimental och skimrande julsaga

Ingvild H Rishøis ord sitter exakt där de ska

I romanen "Stargate. En julberättelse" tar två flickor hand om sin alkoholiserade far och om sig själva. Norska författaren Ingvild H Rishøi tappar inte för en sekund kontrollen, tonen är ren och tyglarna strama, skriver Maria Schottenius.

Stargate. En julberättelse

Ingvild H. Rishøi

Översättare: Marie Lundquist

förlag (2021)

med fantasilöst slut

Ingvild H. Rishøi skriver med glasklar blick för barns realiteter

Av: Åsa Linderborg

ummen saftglogg

Oerhört bra julberättelse – läs den inte

Stargate. Rishøis julberättelse är magisk – och svart som sot

Tragiskt och vackert om Norges baksida

Sweden – Press & Events

As you all know, Invgild's popularity in Sweden **grows** with each year, and she has visited the Gothenburg Book Fair multiple times as well as done several appreciated events and talks. Most recently, Ingvild visited Stockholm after being invited by Stockholm School of Economics and book retailer Adlibris Pocket to take part in two author talks.

Adlibris Pocket was **filled to the brim** with people who came to listen to Ingvild, and it is even more extraordinary considering that Adlibris Pocket usually has the premise that the author must have published a novel fairly recently, but they made an **exception** for Ingvild this time. Ingvild's previous talks have been **sold out in minutes,** and this one was no different.





The overall press coverage around Ingvild and *Brightly Shining* was **immense** in Sweden. Shortly after the book's release, Ingvild made an appearance at ***Malou efter tio***, one of Sweden's **biggest** interview programs. There she spoke about *Brightly Shining*, her authorship and the recurring theme of writing about vulnerable children.

She has also done interviews with **major newspapers** in Sweden such as *Dagens Nyheter* and *Aftonbladet*.

Sweden – Press



DN.KULTUR
BOKLÖRDAG

"Jag har hundra procents kontrollbehov"

Ingvild Rishøi: "När jag förstod att Astrid Lindgren var en riktig människa ville jag bli författare."

– Barn till alkoholister är rädda året runt

Ingvild H Rishøi har skrivit en julsaga full av både misär och magi

Britt Peruzzi

Publicerad 2021-12-18

Foto: Håkon Mosvold Larsen / NTB / TT

Blytung realism, skrev recensenterna om hennes förra succébok.

Nu tar norska Ingvild H Rishøi grepp om årets mest laddade högtid.

– Många undrar vad man ska göra med alkoholistbarnen som är rädda på

»Vi har båda söta systrar«

Hon identifierar sig med Madicken, ger en dålig bok max 50 sidor och skrattar åt en kräksaen i ett tält. Här är tio mer eller mindre okända sidor av den norska sensationen INGVILD H. RISHØI.

Denmark – Batzer & Co.



The Danish edition of *Brightly Shining* was published on December 10th, 2021, around the same time as the Norwegian and Swedish editions, by Batzer & Co. In 2024, Batzer & Co. did a reprint of the book with an afterword by **renowned** Danish author **Thomas Korsgaard.**

Just as for the other two Scandinavian publications, *Brightly Shining* was featured in all the big Danish newspapers with **concurring critics**. Here are a few excepts:

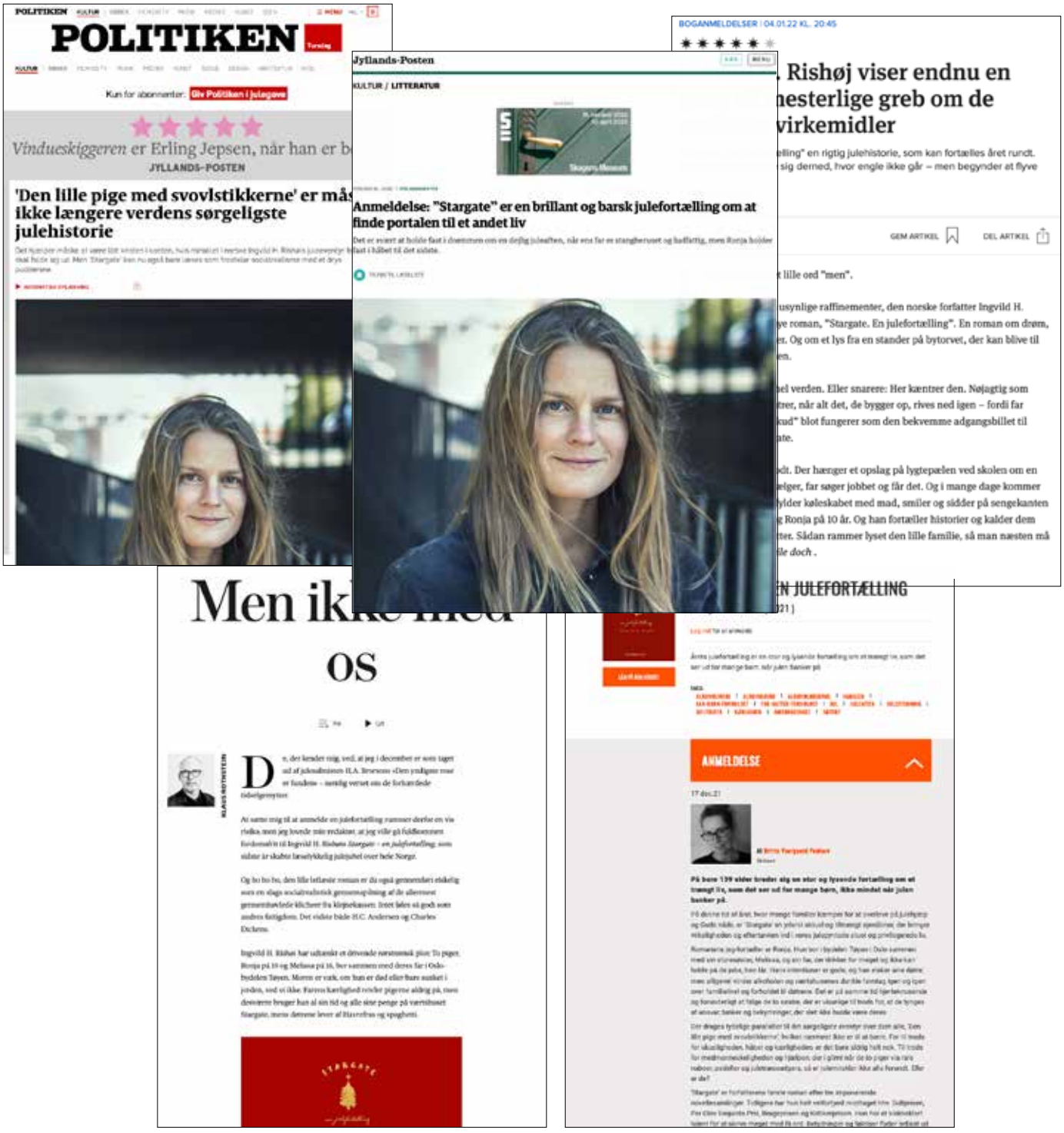
"Rishøi is as always class conscious and thorough in her portrayal of the lives of vulnerable people in modern Norway. [...] The reader may think that the pattern is just weaved into the bland colors of predictability, but no! Ingvild Rishøi is not only a magician but also a humorist. [...] small poetic points of reference, magical steppingstones or Hansel and Gretel's pebbles, [are] scattered through the story."
– *Politiken* (DK)

"Notice the small word 'but'. It is one of the almost invisible refinements that the Norwegian author Ingvild H. Rishøi uses in her novel *Brightly Shining*. [...] That 'but' contains a whole world. [...] An amazingly beautiful story. [...] And if it sounds sad then it is sad. But that sorrow and the 'buts' are there, but it is also the complete opposite. Love and 'and's'. Because roses grow in valleys. And if there is anyone who can pick flowers from the bottom shelf it is Ingvild H. Rishøi. The author knows her reality. She knows that Stargate is the way both to heaven and hell. It is precisely that socially clairvoyant realism that is Ingvild H. Rishøi's brand. And not the least her ability to conjure the miracle from it. Look, it is a real Christmas tale, one that can be told all year around."
– *Kristeligt Dagblad* (DK)

"This small, easily read novel is completely lovable as well. [...] This is not a hallelujah story, fortunately, and Ingvild H. Rishøi's writing is beautiful and poetic, but with a luring unsentimental brutality just beneath the surface."
– *Weekendavisen* (DK)

"*Brightly Shining* is simply the most heartbreaking Christmas story. [...] Ingvild H. Rishøi's social realistic style is ingenious. With very few words, very few thin strokes and ultra-short dialogues, she succeeds in portraying Ronja's inner emotions, so that you can feel her anxious anticipation, her nagging observations of the father's fluctuating behavior and her overloaded emotions down to her outermost nerve ending."
– *Jyllands-Posten* (DK)

Denmark – Reviews



POLITIKEN

Kun for abonnenter: Giv Politiken i julegave

'Den lille pige med svovlstikkerne' er mås ikke længere verdens sørgeligste julehistorie

JYLLANDS-POSTEN

Jyllands-Posten

KULTUR / LITTERATUR

Anmeldelse: "Stargate" er en brillant og barsk julefortælling om at finde portalen til et andet liv

BOGANMELDELSER | 04.01.22 KL. 20:45

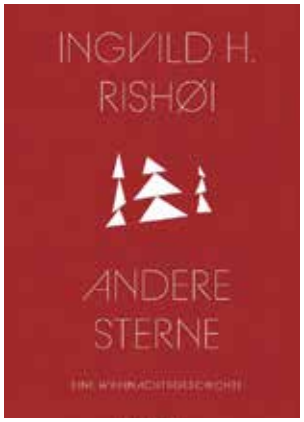
Rishøj viser endnu en nesterlige greb om de virkemidler

GEM ARTIKEL DEL ARTIKEL

Men ikke med os

ANMELDELSE

Germany – DuMont



Brightly Shining was published in Germany on September 20th, 2022, in order to catch the Christmas slots with German booksellers. It was published as a **beautiful** linen hardback, with an embossed title, giving the book an extra coveted feel. DuMont positioned *Brightly Shining* as their literary **Christmas gift-book.**

In September of this year, DuMont will publish a mass-market paperback edition of the book, with an adaptation of the UK cover. We are very glad to see that *Brightly Shining* will get the chance to reach more readers in Germany!



Germany – Reviews

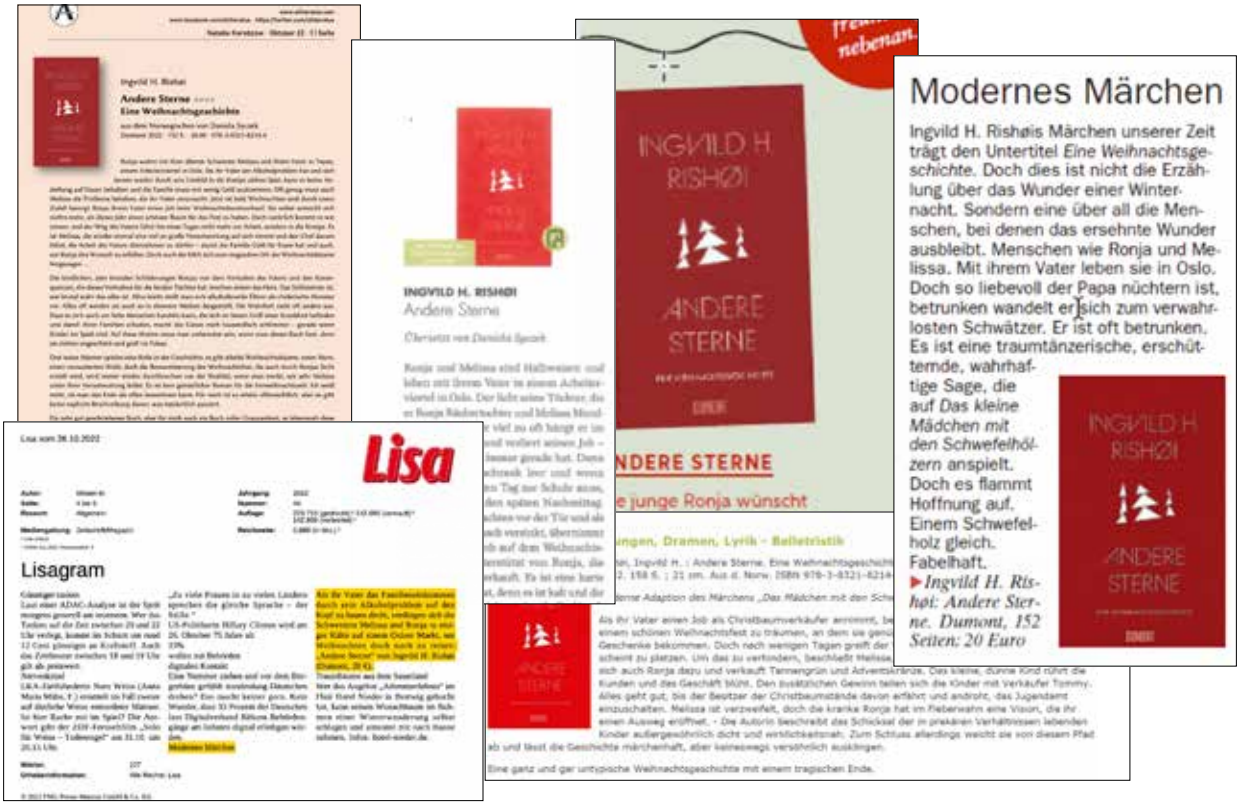
Below you will find some **lovely** excerpts from German reviews:

"The childish yet brutal portrayal of Ronja's father's behavior and the consequences it has for the two daughters is heartbreaking. The worst thing is how brutally true it is. It is all too easy to imagine alcoholic parents as choleric monsters. Too often they are portrayed as such in various media. The truth often looks different. [...] A very well-written book."
– *Alliteratus* (DE)

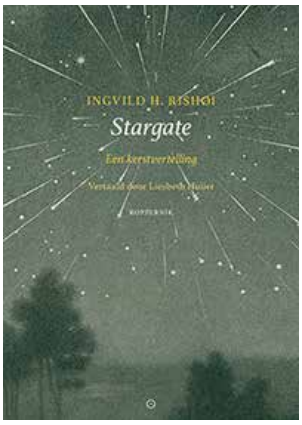
"It is a dreamlike, harrowing, truthful tale that alludes to *The Little Match Girl*. But there is hope. Like a match. Fantastic."
– *Merkur* (DE)

"A poetic, magical Christmas tale that has the potential of becoming a modern classic."
– *Bücher Magazine* (DE)

"*Brightly Shining* is a Christmas story without the glaze and glitter. It is more reminiscent of the stories by Wolfdietrich Schnurre or Hans Fallada. But it is just this that makes it so special. Because at the end of the day it is Ronja, the smallest and weakest, that gives the reader back their hope and faith for a better life. A true Christmas story from real life."
– *Delmenhorst Kreisblatt* (DE)



Netherlands – Koppernik



The Dutch edition of *Brightly Shining* hit the shelves on October 27th, 2022. In connection to the launch, multiple bookstores in the Netherlands highlighted the book with **huge posters** in their windows, and the book was recommended in a feature in a Dutch evening **tv-show.**

To no one's surprise, the Dutch critics also took the book **to heart**, and **lauded** it across the board:

"For those who want a seasonal read, *Brightly Shining* by Ingvild H. Rishøi is a great alternative. [...] A beautiful fairy tale."
– *De Morgen* (NL)

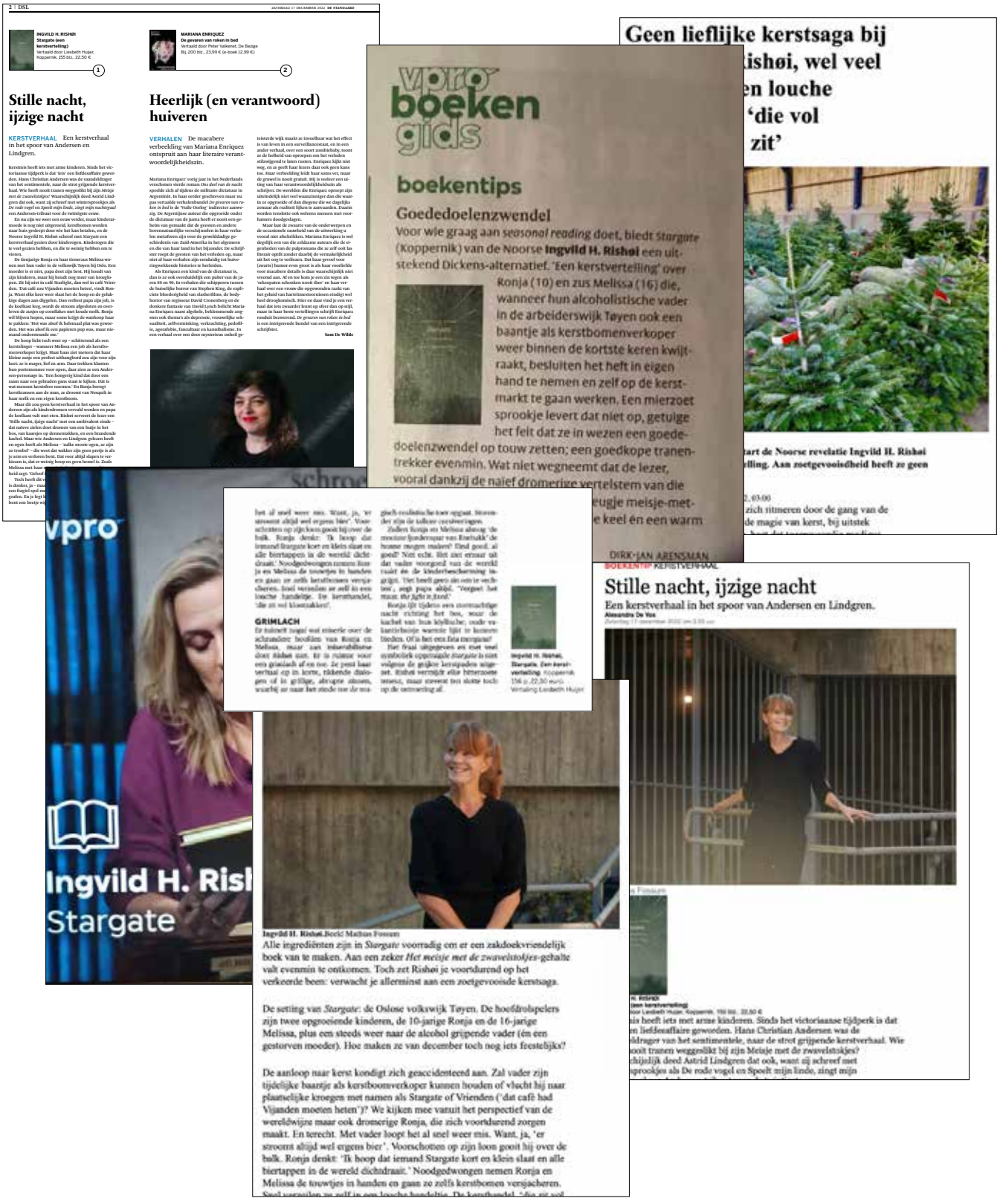
"[This] story is dark, but also tender and poetic. [...] You put it down with a lump in your throat, yet wiser and a little bit broken"
– *De Standaard* (NL)

"Raw, yet tender. [...] It grabs a hold of you."
– *Brommer op Zee* (NL)

"Beautiful, heart-warming, but above all a poignant Christmas story for the non-believer."
– *Jaap Robben* (NL)

"With *Brightly Shining*, Norwegian Ingvild H. Rishøi has written a touching Christmas tale about the (dis)illusions of living with an alcoholic father. If you're still looking for a gift at the end of the year to soften up the heart of relatives, you'll surely be successful with *Brightly Shining*. [...] The story is everything else than heavy and sentimental. [...] Rishøi doesn't need more than 150 pages to create memorable and deeply human characters that go straight to your heart. Her book could have become another comprehensive family novel, but its strength lies in its limitation. Ronja and Melissa's story latches on to the reader's mind. This book deserves a book club that thoroughly discusses the book's style, symbolism, and layers."
– *8Weekly* (NL)

Netherlands – Reviews



2 | DSL

ZATERDAG 17 DECEMBER 2022 DE STANDAARD

INGVILD H. RISHØI
Stargate (een kerstvertelling)
Vertaald door Liesbeth Huijer.
Koppernik, 155 blz., 22,50 €

1

MARIANA ENRIQUEZ
De gevaren van roken in bed
Vertaald door Peter Vallenet, De Bezige Bij, 200 blz., 23,99 € (e-boek 12,99 €)

2

Stille nacht, ijzige nacht

KERSTVERHAAL Een kerstverhaal in het spoor van Andersen en Lindgren.

Kerstmis heeft iets met arme kinderen. Sinds het victoriaanse tijdperk is dat 'iets' een liefdesaffaire geworden. Hans Christian Andersen was de vaandeldrager van het sentimentele, naar de strot grijpende kerstverhaal. Wie heeft nooit tranen weggeslikt bij zijn *Meisje met de zwavelstokjes*? Waarschijnlijk deed Astrid Lindgren dat ook, want zij schreef met winteroprookjes als *De rode vogel en Speelt mijn linde, zingt mijn nachtegaal* een Andersen-tribuut voor de twintigste eeuw.

En nu zijn we weer een eeuw verder, maar kindermoede is nog niet uitgestorven, kerstbomen worden naar huis gesleept door wie het kan betalen, en de Noorse Ingvild H. Rishøi schreef met *Stargate* een kerstverhaal gezien door kinderogen. Kinderogen die te veel gezien hebben, en die te weinig hebben om te vieren.

De tienjarige Ronja en haar tienzusje Melissa wonen met hun vader in de volkswijk Tøyen bij Oslo. Een moeder is er niet, papa doet zijn best. Hij houdt van zijn kinderen, maar hij houdt nog meer van kroegjuren. Zit hij niet in café Starlight, dan wel in café Vrienden. 'Dat café zou Vijanden moeten heten', vindt Ronja. Want elke keer weer slaat het de hoop en de gelukkige dagen aan diggelen. Dan verliest papa zijn job, is de koelkast leeg, wordt de stroom afgesloten en overleven de zusjes op cornflakes met koude melk. Ronja wil blijven hopen, maar soms krijgt de wanhoop haar te pakken: 'Het was alsof ik helemaal plat was geworden. Het was alsof ik een papieren pop was, maar niemand onderstreepte me.'

De hoop licht toch weer op – schitterend als een kerstslinger – wanneer Melissa een job als kerstboomverkoper krijgt. Haar baas ziet meteen dat haar kleine zusje een perfect uitlaatgebrek zou zijn voor kost: ze is mager, lief en arm. Daar trekken klanten hun portemonnee voor open, daar zien ze een Andersen-personage in. 'Een hongerig kind dat door een ruam naar een gebreden gans staat te kijken. Dát is wat mensen kerstsfeer noemen.' En Ronja brengt kerstkransen aan de man, ze droomt van Nesquik in haar mafk en een eigen kerstboom.

Maar dit zou geen kerstverhaal in het spoor van Andersen zijn als kinderdromen vervuld worden en papa de koelkast vult met eten. Rishøi serveert de lezer een 'Stille nacht, ijzige nacht' met een ambivalent einde – dat native zielen doet dromen van een hutje in het bos, van kaarsjes op dennentakken, en een brandende kachel. Maar wie Andersen en Lindgren gelezen heeft en ogen heeft als Melissa – 'vulkr mooie ogen, ze zijn zo troebel' – die weet dat wakker zijn geen prestje is als je arm en verloren bent. Dat voor altijd slapen te verkiezen is, dat er weinig hoop en geen hemel is. Zoals Melissa met haar [illegible] heid zegt: 'Geloof [illegible]

Toch heeft dit v[illegible] is denkst, ja – maa[illegible] een fragiel spel met [illegible] graften. En je legt h[illegible] bent een heerlijk wa[illegible]

Heerlijk (en verantwoord) huiveren

VERHALEN De macabere verbeelding van Mariana Enriquez ontspruit aan haar literaire verantwoordelijkheidszin.

Mariana Enriquez' vorig jaar in het Nederlands verschenen vierde roman *Ons deel van de nacht* opende zich al tijdens de militaire dictatuur in Argentinië. In haar eerder geschreven maar nu pas vertaalde verhalenbundel *De gevaren van roken in bed* is de 'Vuile Oorlog' indirecter aanwezig. De Argentijnse auteur die opgroeide onder de dictatuur van de junta heeft er nooit een geheim van gemaakt dat de gruwen en andere bovennatuurlijke verschijnselen in haar verhalen metaforen zijn voor de gewelddadige geschiedenis van Zuid-Amerika in het algemeen en die van haar land in het bijzonder. De schrijfster roept de geesten van het verleden op, maar niet al haar verhalen zijn eendelig tot huiveringwekkende historiën te herleiden.

Als Enriquez een kind van de dictatuur is, dan is ze ook overduidelijk een puber van de jaren 80 en 90. In verhalen die schrijvers tussen de huiselijke horror van Stephen King, de expliciete bloedcirkel van slasherfilms, de bodyhorror van regisseur David Cronenberg en de donkere fantasie van David Lynch hellicht Mariana Enriquez naast afgrijzelijk, beklemmende angsten ook thema's als depressie, vrouwelijke seksualiteit, zelfvernieling, verkrachting, pedofilie, agorafobie, faneurlraar en kannibalisme. In een verhaal over een door mysterieus onheil getroffen wijk maakt ze invoelbaar wat het effect is van leven in een surveillancestaat, en in een ander verhaal, over een soort zombiehuis, toont ze de holheid van oproepen om het verleden stilstegrond te laten rusten. Enriquez kijkt niet weg, en ze geeft haar lezers daar ook geen kans toe. Haar verbeelding leidt haar soms ver, maar de gruwel is nooit gratuit. Hij is verlicht een uiting van haar verantwoordelijkheidszin als schrijver. De werelden die Enriquez oproept zijn uiteindelijk niet veel waanzinniger dan die waarin ze opgroeide of dan diegene die we dagelijks zonnaar als realiteit lijken te aanvaarden. Daarin worden totalitair ook velerus mensen met voorhamers doodgeslagen.

Maar haar de zwarte van de onderwerpen en de occasionele ruwheid van de uitwerking e vooral niet afschrikken. Mariana Enriquez is wel degelijk een van die zeldzame auteurs die de ingenheden van de pulpromans die ze zelf ook las literair uplift zonder daarbij de verrukkelijkheid uit het oog te verliezen. Dat haar gevoel voor (zwarte) humor even groot is als haar voorliefde voor macabere details is daar waarschijnlijk niet vreemd aan. Af en toe kom je een zin tegen als 'seksspeken schenken nooit thee' en haar verhaal over een vrouw die opgewonden raakt van het gehuil van hartritmestoornissen eindigt wel heel droogkomisch. Hier en daar vind je een verhaal dat iets swaarder kunt op sfeer dan op wijl, maar in haar beste vertellingen schrijft Enriquez roudut bezwerend. *De gevaren van roken in bed* is een intrigerende bundel van een intrigerende schrijfster.

Sam De Wilde

vpro boeken gids

boekentips

Goededoelenzwendel

Voor wie graag aan *seasonal reading* doet, biedt *Stargate* (Koppernik) van de Noorse **Ingvild H. Rishøi** een uitstekend Dickens-alternatief. 'Een kerstvertelling' over Ronja (10) en zus Melissa (16) die, wanneer hun alcoholistische vader in de arbeiderswijk Tøyen ook een baantje als kerstbomenverkoper weer binnen de kortste keren kwijtraakt, besluiten het heft in eigen hand te nemen en zelf op de kerstmarkt te gaan werken. Een mierzoet sprookje levert dat niet op, getuige het feit dat ze in wezen een goededoelenzwendel op touw zetten; een goedkope tranentrekker evenmin. Wat niet wegneemt dat de lezer, vooral dankzij de naïef dromerige vertelstem van die eugje meisje-met-e keel én een warm

DIRK-JAN ARENSMAN

Geen lieflijke kerstsaga bij
ishøi, wel veel
n louche
'die vol
zit'

art de Noorse revelatie Ingvild H. Rishøi
elling. Aan zoetgevooisdheid heeft ze geen

2, 03:00
zich ritmeren door de gang van de
de magie van kerst, bij uitstek

het al snel weer mis. Want, ja, 'er stroomt altijd wel ergens bier'. Voorschotten op zijn loon gooit hij over de balk. Ronja denkt: 'Ik hoop dat iemand Stargate kort en klein slaat en alle biertappen in de wereld dichtdraait.' Noodgedwongen nemen Ronja en Melissa de teuwtjes in handen en gaan ze zelfs kerstbomen versjacheren. Snel verzinnen ze zelf in een louche handeltje. De kerstbomenhandel, 'die zit vol klootzakken'.

GRIMLACH

Er huilwerd hoogst wat triviarie over de achtergelaten hoofden van Ronja en Melissa, maar aan inlaverbildheid doet Rishøi niet. Er is ruimte voor een grimlach af en toe. Ze jemt haar verhaal op in korte, fakkende dialogen of in grillige, abrupte zinnen, waarbij ze naar het einde toe de magisch-realistische toer opgaat. Stormen zijn de talkeur oversteegen.

Zodra Ronja en Melissa alsnog 'de meeste fjonderspaar van Enebakk' de beense mogen maken? Eind goed, al goed? Niet echt. Het ziet ernaar uit dat vader voorgoed van de wereld raakt én de kinderbescherming ingrijpt. 'Het heeft geen zin om te vechten', zegt papa altijd. 'Vergeet het maar, *the fight is fixed*.'

Ronja ijlt tijdens een stormachtige nacht richting het bos, waar de kachel van Ivan Idyllische, oude vakantiehuisje warmte lijkt te beloven. Of is het een fata morgana?

Het frasi uitgegeven en met veel symboliek opgevulde *Stargate* is niet vulgarus de gelijke kerstsprookjes uitgezet. Rishøi vermijdt elke bitterzoete teswerd, maar verweet het slotte toch op de ontmoeting af.

Ingvild H. Rishøi, Stargate. Een kerstvertelling. Koppernik. 156 p. 22,50 euro. Vertaling Liesbeth Huijer

DERKRIJK ARENSMAN
BOEKENTIP KERSTVERHAAL

Stille nacht, ijzige nacht

Een kerstverhaal in het spoor van Andersen en Lindgren.

Alexandra De Vos

Zaterdag 17 december 2022 om 5:00 uur

Ingvild H. Rishøi. Beeld Mathias Fossum

Alle ingrediënten zijn in *Stargate* voorradig om er een zakdoekvriendelijk boek van te maken. Aan een zeker *Het meisje met de zwavelstokjes*-gehalte valt evenmin te ontkomen. Toch zet Rishøi je voortdurend op het verkeerde been: verwacht je allerminst aan een zoetgevooisde kerstsaga.

De setting van *Stargate*: de Oslose volkswijk Tøyen. De hoofdrolspelers zijn twee opgroeiende kinderen, de 10-jarige Ronja en de 16-jarige Melissa, plus een steeds weer naar de alcohol grijpende vader (én een gestorven moeder). Hoe maken ze van december toch nog iets feestelijks?

De aanloop naar kerst kondigt zich geaccidenteerd aan. Zal vader zijn tijdelijke baantje als kerstboomverkoper kunnen houden of vlucht hij naar plaatselijke kroegen met namen als Stargate of Vrienden ('dat café had Vijanden moeten heten')? We kijken mee vanuit het perspectief van de wereldwijze maar ook dromerige Ronja, die zich voortdurend zorgen maakt. En terecht. Met vader loopt het al snel weer mis. Want, ja, 'er stroomt altijd wel ergens bier'. Voorschotten op zijn loon gooit hij over de balk. Ronja denkt: 'Ik hoop dat iemand Stargate kort en klein slaat en alle biertappen in de wereld dichtdraait.' Noodgedwongen nemen Ronja en Melissa de teuwtjes in handen en gaan ze zelfs kerstbomen versjacheren. Snel verzinnen ze zelf in een louche handeltje. De kerstbomenhandel, 'die zit vol

Russia – AST



The Russian edition of *Brightly Shining* was published by AST on August 24th, 2022. They did a **beautiful**, Christmas tale-like cover with Ronja on the front selling her bundles.

In connection to the publication, *Brightly Shining* was **praised** in a review from TV channel *Moscow24*, as well as **lauded** by *WillieWinkieBooks*:

"[...] a warm story with a lot of humor."

Slovakia – Tatran

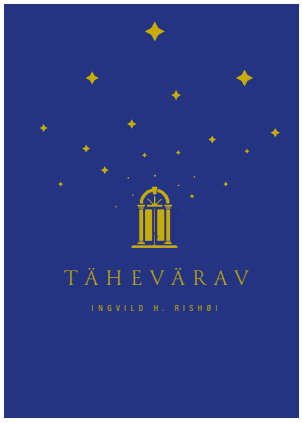


Brightly Shining was published in Slovakia on November 25th, 2022, by Tatran and immediately received **high praise** from readers:

"This is really an unusually powerful Christmas tale for adults. The painful life for 10-year-old Ronja and her 16-year-old sister Melissa, who has to take care of the household as their father falls off the wagon again and again. I was hoping for a Christmas miracle for the girls at all times. In the end I got it, but very different than I expected."
– *Goodreads* (SK)

"Beautifully written. I read most of it with a lump in the throat and still recovering from that. The author knows how you, in a beautiful way, describes a child's thoughts and imagination. It is unbelievable how much children loves their parents, despite all their mistakes, and how they are always ready to forgive us."
– @montessorikids.sk, Instagram (SK)

Estonia – Tänapäev



Tänapäev published *Brightly Shining* in Estonia in November of 2023, and it is fantastic to see that the book is still reaching new readers, and that the book still continues to make waves there.

A few months ago, it received a new, **glowing** review from daily newspaper *Lääne Elu*, praising its poetic and distinctive style:

"[It] charmed me with its poetic and mystical touch. [...] The author prefers simple sentences, yet with deep meaning and wisdom which makes Rishøi's readily comprehensible work multi-faceted and thought-provoking. She expresses herself softly, through a cloud of mist, as if she does not want to overburden the reader or overwhelm them with too many twists and turns. The author's directness and terseness of expression [...] melted me in the end, snow left too long in spring."

– *Lääne Elu* (EE)



RAAMATUARVUSTUS

Tütarlaps kuuseokstega

Riiulil sillerdas safiirsinine raamat, mis kandis pealkirja „Tähevärav". See sõna võlus mind oma poeetilisuse ja salapäraga. Mis kerkib mu silme ette, kui mõtlen täheväravale? See on midagi kauget ja kättesaamatut, ent midagi väga ihaldusväärset – nagu maagiline portaal, mis viib öndsuse juurde.

MARIA MAI SIMUT

Raamatu autor Ingvild H. Rishøi.

„Tähevärav"
- Ingvild H. Rishøi
- Norra keelest tõlkinud Lisa Reitel Heyer
- Arvustus võitis Eesti lastekirjanduse kerkuse ülle-eestilise arvustusvõistluse kapsas

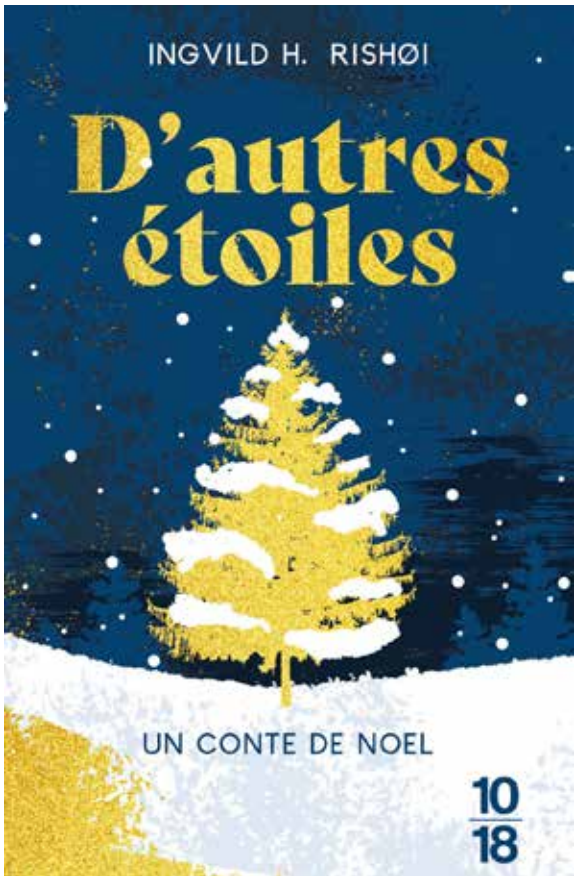
France – Mercure



On October 13th, 2022, Mercure de France published the French edition of *Brightly Shining*, a beautiful edition with a cover where we can see a glimpse of a snowy Oslo and the **Stargate-pub.**

Brightly Shining quickly became a **favorite** among booksellers. Valérie Ohanian at the bookstore Librairie Masséna in Nice said "The narrative is carried from a child's perspective, full of hope and life, *Brightly Shining* is a modern Christmas tale, reminiscent of Andersen's *The Little Match Girl*."

Paperback publisher 10/18 will publish a **paperback edition** of *Brightly Shining* in October of this year. It's great to see this commitment despite that the original edition came out almost three years prior and we are so glad that new readers will get the chance to discover this wonderful book.



France – Reviews

Brightly Shining garnered some **lovely reviews** in both France and Belgium:

"A little miracle of literature."
– *Les Echos* (FR)

"The Norwegian short story author publishes a gripping debut novel, about two sisters who live alone with their loving but alcoholic father. In *Brightly Shining* the sadness is poignant, but the happiness even more so."
– *Liberation* (FR)

"In this first novel, the combination of not lapsing too much into sentimentality and the possibility for a miracle gives a warm dose of tenderness and poetry. As well as optimism."
– *Arts Libre* (BE)



COMMENT ÇA S'ÉCRIT

Ingvild H. Rishøi, sapins bénis

Par MATHIEU LINDON

Par une nuit d'hiver, deux sœurs

★★ **D'autres étoiles** Roman De Ingvild H. Rishøi, traduit du norvégien par Jean-Baptiste Coursaud, Mercure de France, 165 pp. Prix 17 €, version numérique 12 €.

Dans le sillage de *La petite marchande d'allumettes* d'Hans Christian Andersen, Ingvild H. Rishøi signe un conte de Noël mettant en scène des enfants qui se débattent dans une grande précarité. Ronya et Melissa, dix et seize ans, vivent avec leur père qui les élève seul. A l'approche de Noël, ce dernier perd son emploi de vendeur de sapins, un énième boulot abandonné à cause de son alcoolisme. Rêvant de s'offrir le sapin qui illuminera leur quotidien, Melissa reprend courageusement son poste (avant et après l'école), bientôt rejointe par Ronya qui jouera sur une corde sensible pour attirer les clients – au risque d'alerter les services sociaux. L'argent qu'elles récoltent est synonyme de petits plaisirs, mais permet aussi un rêve plus grand: une vie plus confortable dans un chalet. Mêlant sans mièvrerie espoir et possibilité d'un miracle, ce premier roman apporte une chaleureuse dose de tendresse, de poésie. D'optimisme, aussi. G.S.

Spain – Galaxia Gutenberg



Brightly Shining was published in Spain by Galaxia Gutenberg on November 2nd, 2022. Galaxia Gutenberg did their own spin on the **beautiful**, flowery, Swedish cover. In connection to the publication, Ingvild did an interview with newspaper *La Lectura*, where she spoke about her writing process and why she decided to write the novel.

The Spanish edition of *Brightly Shining* is no exception when it comes to **rave reviews:**

"In this seemingly simple and direct story, where also the older sister Melissa plays an important role, the author portrays from Ronja's perspective, a childhood and a family doomed to be vulnerable, where children have to grow up faster than they should, cope without their parents and even take care of them. A captivating and touching novel, sad and full of kindness, that does good and hurts, but above all it has you in its grip from the first to the last page. And those who rarely cry when they read, will have a hard time not to."
– *Hola!* (ES)

"*Brightly Shining*, which is not only the title of the novel but also the pub where the father goes to get drunk, tells the whole story from a child's perspective, but with all the complexity and intensity of the problems, happiness' and disappointments that the adult world holds."
– *Menorca* (ES)

"A beautiful contemporary twist on the Christmas tale. [...] The most important aspect of this novel is the voice. [...] Don't expect a disheartening book, but rather a brilliant one, even if it does make you cry."
– *La Vanguardia* (ES)

"[*Brightly Shining*] captivated me from the first page. It tells the story of Norwegian girl Ronja, whose family is extremely dysfunctional and very economically vulnerable. It's a very tragic book, but it's also filled with kindness. It takes place during Christmas and is sort of a version of *The Little Match Girl*."
– *Clara* (ES)

Spain – Reviews



MALA FAMA

La novela perfecta (pero perfecta) para leer en Navidad

Ingvild H. Rishoi presenta 'La puerta de las estrellas', una joya de la narrativa breve donde resuenan Dickens, Faulkner y Ken Loach

Por Alberto Olmos

Fue un tuit (no he conseguido localizarlo) el que hace un mes me puso sobre la pista de *La puerta de las estrellas* (Galaxia Gutenberg), de Ingvild H. Rishoi. Es curioso que un simple tuit pueda vender libros, abrirles un **camino ascendente** y echar a rodar la bola del boca a boca. Esto antes era privativo de los suplementos culturales, y de los que leían en el metro. Luciendo lectura entre una estación y otra, te **dan pistas para tu siguiente libro**. Pero ya nadie lee en el metro, y la crítica literaria del periódico ha muerto desde el mismo momento en que a la gente se le ha permitido **decir *me gusta* muy alto**. No hacía falta mucho más.

La puerta de las estrellas es una novelita. Tiene muchos espacios en blanco, muchas **escenas breves** normalmente dialogadas. La concentración formal de la obra solo sugiere talento. Para escribir 600 páginas, hace falta más bien sudar, virtudes atléticas. Para hacer algo corto, con **mucha relojería narrativa**, tiene uno que ser muy mirado con las palabras, no **ir poniéndolas** de 100.000 en 100.000 como Karl Ove Knausgaard, sino **de una en una**.

Últimas noticias

Ingvild H. Rishøi
La puerta de las estrellas
Traducción del noruego de Lene Katrine Tollefsen

La puerta de las estrellas, de Ingvild H. Rishøi (Galaxia Gutenberg)

Ronja, de diez años, siempre ha soñado con tener un árbol de Navidad. Pero su padre, un viudo amable y cansado, y víctima del alcohol, no consigue permanecer en un mismo trabajo el tiempo suficiente para ganar el dinero que gastar en lo que no es esencial. Este año parece que finalmente Ronja cumplirá su sueño, porque su padre ha encontrado trabajo en el mercado de árboles de Navidad. Pero… Con esta historia aparentemente simple y directa, en la que también tiene un papel importante Melissa, la hermana mayor, la autora describe desde la perspectiva de Ronja una infancia y una familia abocadas a la vulnerabilidad, en la que los niños tienen que crecer más rápido de lo que deberían, arreglárselas sin sus padres e incluso cuidar de ellos. Un libro **emocionante y conmovedor, triste y lleno de bondad**, que hace bien y duele, pero sobre todo te tiene en sus garras desde la primera a la última página. Y ante el cual incluso a quien no suele llorar cuando lee se le va a hacer difícil no hacerlo.

El Placer de la Lectura

Ingvild H. Rishøi
La puerta de las estrellas
Traducción del noruego de Lene Katrine Tollefsen

2 de noviembre de 2022

Ronja, de diez años, siempre ha soñado con tener un árbol de Navidad. Pero su padre, un viudo amable y cansado, y víctima del alcohol, no consigue permanecer en un mismo trabajo el tiempo suficiente para ganar el dinero que gastar en lo que no es esencial. Este año parece que finalmente Ronja cumplirá su sueño, porque su padre ha encontrado trabajo en el mercado de árboles de Navidad. Pero…

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"Incluso las víctimas del alcoholismo viven momentos inteligentes, lúcidos e interesantes"

un viudo alcohólico que pierde
a Ronja, de diez años, la narradora
la escritora noruega Ingvild H.
shøi.

pequeña empieza su relato muy esperanzada, puesto que su padre acaba de
ontrar un empleo en el mercado de árboles de Navidad de Tøyen, un barrio
idencial de Oslo. Pero primero ella tuvo que convencerle para que cogiera el
bajo.

BLICIDAD

lo mejor este año podríamos tener un árbol de Navidad –le dijo.

Qué has dicho? –respondió el padre.

i te haces vendedor de árboles –insistió ella–. ¿Podríamos tener un árbol de
vidad?

o. ¿No crees que a los

nja, es una persona amable y
s. A veces él la llama
bandolero. A su hermana
. Entra por la puerta y dice:

los Libros cuentos

La magia inmortal que encierran los cuentos de Navidad

Ingvild H. Rishøi

Italy – Iperborea



Brightly Shining hit the shelves in early October of 2024. Publisher Iperborea crafted an **impressive marketing campaign** centered around social media. Additionally, they distributed the book to journalists and fellow authors, and organized **two** reading groups with booksellers to build buzz.

In addition to this, in late November 2024, Ingvild participated in a **Silent Book Club** event organized by the publisher. The event began with invited book ambassadors reading *Brightly Shining* together in silence, followed by an engaging **Q&A session** where attendees had the opportunity to ask Ingvild various questions about the book. The event was a **tremendous success**, offering Italian readers a wonderful chance to connect with Ingvild and discuss the book.

The Italian critics are **loving** *Brightly Shining*! Here are a few excerpts:

"Touching and emotional, rediscovering true Christmas spirit."
– *Vogue* (IT)

"A perfect fairytale to tune into cheerfulness."
– *Vanity Fair* (IT)

"[...] a delightful Christmas story that speaks to all ages."
– *Amica* (IT)


VANITY FAIR

Sally Rooney e gli altri: i 30 libri da regalare (e leggere) a Natale 2024

La porta delle stelle di Ingvild Rishøi


FILOSOFICA MENTE
PALESTRA DI EMOZIONI QUOTIDIANE

ACCENDI LA FELICITÀ


VOGUE
ITALIA

55 libri da regalare a Natale 2024: trova quello più adatto anche quando non sai cosa comprare

Romanzi, storie e racconti di Natale

Una famiglia imperfetta ma profondamente unita (e può essere simile alla tua più di quanto pensi). In *La porta delle stelle*, Ronja, una bambina di dieci anni dalla risata contagiosa e dallo spirito indomito, ci mostra come la speranza possa sbocciare sempre., diventando l'emblema di come la famiglia (o la comunità) possa essere fondamentale nei momenti più difficili. Toccante ed emozionante, per riscoprire il vero spirito natalizio.

Italy – Interviews

Ingvild also participated in **several interviews**, including one with Italian newspaper *Il Manifesto*. In the feature, she discussed her writing process, the influence of fairy tales on her work, and her reflections on hope and dreams.

Ingvild also sat down for an **in-depth interview** with renowned writer and journalist Angelo Ferracuti for *Corriere della Sera*, one of Italy's **largest newspapers**. The interview took place in Ingvild's home in Oslo, where she discussed her writing process, the inspiration behind *Brightly Shining* and her own experience working as a Christmas tree salesperson.

In addition to this, Ingvild was interviewed by *Rete Due*, a Swiss cultural radio channel in the Italian-speaking region of Switzerland. Her interview was part of a special literary **Christmas episode**, which aired in December 2024. During the interview, she shared the inspiration behind *Brightly Shining*, her decision to craft a Christmas story that isn't solely bright, and her favorite aspects of the holiday season. To cap it off, Ingvild treated listeners to a reading of a passage from the book in Norwegian.



Un albero di Natale: sogno di un'altra Oslo



GRANDE NORD

Un'infanzia vissuta con l'inganno

La scrittrice norvegese Ingvild Rishøi parla del libro «La porta delle stelle»

Tutto ciò che c'è da sapere sull'imprevedibile «popolo nascosto»

Slovakia – Mladinska knjiga



The Slovenian edition of *Brightly Shining* was published on November 2nd, 2024, by Mladinska knjiga. The book immediately received a **wonderful review** from newspaper *Ljubljanske novice*, who had this to say about the book:

"[...] *Brightly Shining* is Christmas story of our time, which encourages reflection on poverty, hope and dream."

Publisher Mladinska knjiga also held a **press release** for the book, which was covered by **national TV.**

Macedonia – Antalog Books



Brightly Shining hit the shelves in Macedonia in December 2024 and they did a **beautiful,** Christmassy cover.

Hungary – Polar Könyvek



The Hungarian edition of *Brightly Shining* hit the shelves in November of 2024, and it was quickly **lauded** in an **outstanding review** from Hungarian daily newspaper *Szeged*:

"Rishøi skillfully brings her characters to life with a few strokes of her pen, and depicts the environment with just as much grace, like realism and the wondrous, childlike fantasy world in a perfect juxtaposition. This short piece differs from the usual Christmas themed works. It is worth paying attention to."

Iceland – Benedikt



Icelandic readers first got the chance to read Brightly *Shining* on November 20th, 2024. Publisher Benedikt did a **lovely** purple cover, sure to catch the eyes of many readers.

Romania – Casa Cartii De Stiinta



Casa Cartii De Stiinta published *Brightly Shining* in November 2024, and it was instantly **praised** on Romanian radio channel *Radio România Cluj* in a lovely feature. Here is what they had to say:

"*Brightly Shining* is without a doubt one of the saddest Christmas stories, but it is also filled with glimpses of hope. [...] *Brightly Shining* is, and remains, a novel that leaves a lasting impression on every reader."

In early March of this year, Ingvild took part in **DiktLek,** an event hosted by the Scandinavian Institute at Babeș-Bolyai University in Romania. During the event, Ingvild was **interviewed** about her authorship, writing process and poetry, providing a fantastic opportunity for Ingvild to connect with her Romanian readers!





UK – Grove Press UK



The UK edition of *Brightly Shining* was published on November 7th, 2024, by Grove Press UK. The team at Grove Press left **no stone unturned** in their marketing campaign. They produced a **special edition** featuring luxurious finishes, signed tip-in sheets (Ingvild signed over 2,500 tip-ins!), and beautifully painted endpapers. These exclusive editions were available only at independent bookstores, who also offered complimentary gift wrap featuring the endpaper design for their customers during the holiday season.

Grove Press UK also invested in **paid promotions** across Facebook and Instagram, submitting the book to NetGalley, as well as pitching it to relevant newsletters and promotional outlets.

Furthermore, *Brightly Shining* was featured prominently in Christmas gifting campaigns, through both paid and organic social media **ads**, as well as targeted **Amazon advertising**.

Ahead of publication, **world renowned singer Dua Lipa** featured the book in a post on her Instagram, saying **"I have a feeling I'm going to race through this one".** Shortly after the book was out, she **praised** *Brightly Shining* on her website *Service95* in a round-up of the best books to gift your loved ones. Here is what she had to say:

"This small but mighty Norwegian Christmas story is like a modern retelling of Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Match Girl* (spoiler: expect tears). The perfect stocking filler."

The feature was also shared on *Service95*'s Instagram, and Dua Lipa amplified it further by posting it on her Instagram story, reaching an audience of over **87 million followers.**

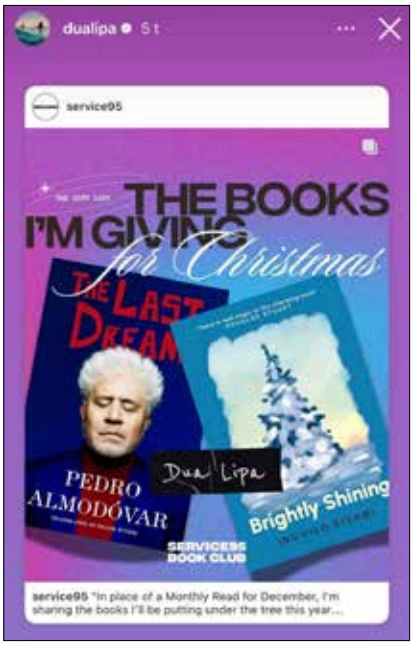



SERVICE95

The 5 Books I'll Be Gifting To My Loved Ones This Year

With the festive season fully in swing, there's no better gift than a book. It doesn't cost the earth, but it means the world – nothing says you have thought deeply about that special someone than a well-considered and beautiful book. So, in place of a Monthly Read for December, I'm sharing the books I'll be putting under the tree this year. Hopefully you'll find something for you from this list, too.

1. *Brightly Shining* **by Ingvild Rishøi, translated by Caroline Waight** – This small but mighty Norwegian Christmas story is like a modern retelling of Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Match Girl* (spoiler: expect tears). The perfect stocking filler.



UK – Reviews

Brightly Shining received **outstanding reviews** from various **important** newspapers in the UK. Here are a few excerpts:

"The sense of place is so strong I could almost smell the pine needles. A beautiful novel about family, community and kindness. Wonderful."
– *Daily Mail* (UK)

"With Christmas only just gone, I hope it's not too late to recommend Ingvild Rishøi's bittersweet seasonal novella. [...] Here's a child's-eye story about adult griefs and troubles which uses dramatic irony to consistent effect. [...] Rishøi's poignant novella [is] told in jagged fragments and easily read in a sitting."
– *The Spectator* (UK)

"If you liked *A Man Called Ove*, or Claire Keegan's writing, Rishøi's charming little novel, *Brightly Shining* – newly translated into English – is for you: one of those deceptively simple books that contains deep wells of emotion and meaning. [...] With fans like Douglas Stuart (who calls it 'magic' and 'charming') and Claire Messed ('the power of a classic'), and a film adaptation in the works, Rishøi is set to be as beloved here as she in her native Norway."
– Pandora Sykes, *Country & Town House* (UK)

"[...] Ingvild Rishøi's *Brightly Shining* is a powerful and heartwarming tale which became a modern classic in its native language. It's clear why. [This is] one that will linger in your mind for a long while after you've finished."
– *Buzz* (UK)

"A beautifully written story about young sisters Ronja and Melissa, whose alcoholic father is unemployed. Set at Christmas, it's a heart-breaking portrait of a family in crisis. [...] Wonderfully festive."
– *Daily Mail,* recommendation round-up (UK)

"Like all good Christmas stories, it stresses the importance of kindness and charity, and Ronja's ever-hopeful voice is tenderly rendered from Norwegian by Caroline Waight."
– *Financial Times* (UK)

UK – Reviews



FINANCIAL TIMES

Fathers figure – five beguiling new debut novels

From the Swiss Alps to Norway via Paris and London — bad dads loom large in this current crop of fiction

The Portrait Girl Nicole Swengley

Brightly Shining

ISAAC CURTIS GARNER

Brightly Shining by Ingvild Rishoi (Grove Press £12.99) re
dad territory, although here he's more pathetic than malevole
Ronja and sweary teenage sister Melissa despair of their alcol
whose attempts to stay sober invariably end in long sessions

He loses a seasonal job selling Christmas trees, whereupon M
and Ronja, not to be outdone, capitalises on her waif-like app
garlands. They are a brave and resourceful pair, but when Me
against reading Hans Christian Andersen's tragic *The Little M*
seems this is going to be an update.

Like all good Christmas stories, it stresses the importance of
charity, and Ronja's ever-hopeful voice is tenderly rendered f
by

buzz

BRIGHTLY SHINING: heartwarmin
Christmas story – finally in English

November 15, 2024
category: books, reviews

Brightly S

Daily Mail

CONTEMPORARIES

SARA LAWRENCE

THE UNEXPECTED
by Ellen Wiles
(HQ £9.99, 432pp)

BEST friends since childhood, Kessie and Robin are in their mid-30s and hearing increasingly loud ticks from their biological clocks.

Single Kessie is wondering whether she can afford to pay for a sperm donor; Robin is seven years into a relationship with a man who won't commit to having a child.

Kessie sets up a profile on a shared parenting app and is delighted when she meets a man who seems mad about her. She is less delighted when he ghosts her, especially when she discovers she's pregnant.

'Ro' is happy for Kessie, but sad for herself – her relationship having imploded when she realised her boyfriend was wasting her time. When Kessie's daughter is born she struggles to bond with her, and Ro steps in hugely. In the process, all sorts of common assumptions about motherhood and family are turned on their head.

It's brilliant on friendship, identity, longing and resilience.

BRIGHTLY SHINING
by Ingvild Rishoi
(Grove Press £12.99, 192pp)

THIS small book (published to rave reviews in Norway in 2021) packs a big

It tells the story of young sisters Ronja and Melissa, whose alcoholic father is out of work again. Set at Christmas, the threat of an intervention by social services hangs heavy over the girls as their dad flounders.

Things seem to look up when he gets a job selling Christmas trees, but he spoils the opportunity by getting drunk.

The girls refuse to accept ruin, demonstrating extreme resilience by taking on the job themselves to keep their family fed and together. The sense of place is so strong I could almost smell the pine needles. A beautiful novel about family, community and kindness. Wonderful.

THE FORTUNE TELLER OF BERLIN
by J. C. Maeliis
(Viking £9.99, 432pp)

IT'S 1940 in Berlin and clairvoyant Edith is working as Hitler's personal fortune teller. She didn't want the job – especially since her predecessor Erik, also her lover, was murdered not long after predicting the Fuhrer's rise to power – but could hardly refuse.

Set on revenge for Erik's death, she agrees to work for the Resistance as a double agent, with the best of British and French intelligence to guide her. Edith visits bookshops to find encrypted messages, which help her to influence Hitler's military decisions. But she lives in fear of her secret being found out – particularly of what would happen to her daughter.

Alongside this, Edith begins an affair with her SS chaperone, who is hiding secrets of his own. The tension ramps up, and it's full of impeccably researched

Brightly Shining by Ingvild Rishøi

NOVEMBER 6, 2024 — WINSTONSDAD

There is nothing bet
matches something
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(Dolce Bellezza Blog
as I often think, the
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Christmas tree lot is

Ronja, the ten-year-
and initially thinks

SPECTATOR

A winter's tale: Brightly Shining, by Ingvild Rishoi, reviewed

SAM LEITH

With Christmas only just gone, I hope it's not too late to recommend Ingvild Rishoi's bittersweet seasonal novella – a bestseller in Norway which now comes into English in Caroline Waight's crisp and fluent prose. Here's a child's-eye story about adult griefs and troubles which narratic irony to consistent effect, a skinny little narrative halfway to being a which nevertheless keeps its roots in reality, with mobile phones, Frosties, swearing, the workings of child protection services and the logistics and economics of the Christmas tree business.

urative, ten-year-old Ronja, and her teenage sister Melissa are growing up in with their alcoholic single dad. Things are pretty bleak. The girls put on a brave ortified of attracting the attention of social services, with all that will follow. atch a lucky break when Ronja learns of a job locally selling Christmas trees. to the job! It's a Christmas miracle! He comes home with armloads of ees, full of affection and hope and good cheer.

on, of course, he falls off the and vanishes to the pub. saves the day by begging to owd to take over his job, and joins her on the lot – her

Ronja joins her on the lot – her wolflike mien helping to drum up business selling wreaths in aid of 'children in need'. Melissa's colleague Tommy offers a port critique of 'Christmas spirit', a.k.a. 'rich people desperate to find someone to help': 'You know who people most want to help at Christmas? More than anybody else in the world? ... Skinny little kids.' A winter storm, meanwhile, is coming.

So here's a story that has its cake and eats it. You're encouraged to pity plucky, innocent little Ronja and her irresponsible doomed capacity for hope; your eyes exist at the little kindnesses she's shown by others, and at her bond with Melissa, who has had to grow up too fast. But you're reminded, too, of the literary conventions that accomplish that, and the way the season sometimes sentimentality. Christmas trees may make you go 'Aaah!', but they're a business, too. 'People think Christmas trees are this happy-crappy thing,' says Melissa after her first day at this 'shitty job'. 'But the Christmas industry is full of shitty people. And my mittens are complete shit too, the needles go right through them.'

Rishoi's poignant novella, told in jagged fragments and easily read in a sitting, takes its bearings more from 'The Little Match Girl' than 'A Christmas Carol'. Indeed, references to the former are threaded pointedly through the story. As the girls fantasise about getting a Christmas tree of their own, Ronja exclaims: 'Like in "The Little Match Girl"!'

"'Don't think about that,' Melissa said. 'That's the saddest story ever.'

'But remember the tree?' I said. 'Don't you remember the tree she's looking at?'

'She's hallucinating,' Melissa said. 'Don't think about that. The girl dies at the end, you know.'

'She doesn't die,' I said. 'She goes to her grandma.'

Melissa took a breath and shook her head, but then she put her face to mine...

Happy endings, eh? All depends how you're looking at them.

Brightly Shining

Matthew Lowe

Ivor Linton
The 'self-cancellation' trend taking over the literary world

Sophie Dudley
It's no surprise that democracy is losing its appeal

COUNTRY & TOWN HOUSE

Pandora Sykes' Pick Of New Writers To Read Now

Eight emerging literary voices

3. Ingvild Rishøi

If you liked *A Man Called Ove*, or Claire Keegan's writing, Rishøi's charming little novel, *Brightly Shining* – newly translated into English – is for you: one of those deceptively simple books that contains deep wells of emotion and meaning. It's about Ronja and Melissa, who take over their father's job selling Christmas trees, as he struggles with alcoholism. With fans like Douglas Stuart (who calls it 'magic' and 'charming') and Claire Messud ('the power of a classic'), and a film adaptation in the works, Rishøi is set to be as beloved here as she is in her native Norway.

US – Grove Press



The US edition of *Brightly Shining* was launched in the US on November 19th, 2024, by Grove Press. Just as the UK publisher they did an **extensive marketing campaign** ahead of publication which included targeted outreach to booksellers, advertising, exciting giveaways and much more.

Additionally, they rolled out a **major digital campaign** featuring banner ads on Goodreads, ads in newsletters, and placements on Literary Hub.

Ahead of publication, the book was also **highlighted** in a Shelf Awareness ad, with **prime placement** in their top skyscraper banner. *Brightly Shining* also earned a **starred review** from Shelf Awareness and with their reach of approximately **400,000 readers**, this glowing endorsement was a fantastic opportunity to showcase the novel. Additionally, the review was prominently featured at the top of their newsletter, ensuring it caught the attention of every subscriber.







US – Praised by Oprah

Shortly after its publication, *Brightly Shining* was chosen as one of **Oprah's Best Books of 2024** in the highly **coveted** *Oprah's Favorite Things*. Here is what they had to say:

"This tender novel does exactly what it promises: shines brightly despite the darkness."

The book club has nearly **2 million members**, so it was fantastic to see this kind of attention for the novel.



The BEST BOOKS of 2024

We all loved Oprah's Book Club selections this year (did you read them all?), but here are our editors' favorite standouts on the shelves—from the thought-provoking to the heartwarming to the hilarious.

BY NATALIE BEACH, FRANCESCA BILLINGTON, CHARLEY BOELOCK, SOFIA LOCATO, LEIGH NEWMAN, AND MARION WINIK

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LI ZHANG

BOOKS THAT LET YOU FEEL

The Tree Doctor

Madwoman

We Were the Universe

Another Word for Love

Intermezzo

Grief Is for People

Brightly Shining

83

US – Grove Press

Brightly Shining quickly entered the **American Booksellers Association Indie Bestseller List** at an impressive **#28** within its very first week of publication. It stayed on the list for **five consecutive weeks** – very impressive!



In April it was announced that *Brightly Shining* had been **shortlisted** for the 2024 ***Big Other*** **Book Award**, contending for best translated book. The prize is awarded by online arts and culture magazine *Big Other* to recognize excellence in literature, and to support the work of innovative writers and adventurous presses.

BIG OTHER

US – Reviews

The reviews for *Brightly Shining* have poured in and they have been **nothing short of outstanding**, with important newspapers such as *The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal* and *Washington Post* giving **total raves**. Here is a glimpse into their praise:

"As the story unfolds, your heart aches for the girls — but also for all of us in this world we've built, where money too often means more than kindness. [...] An emotionally packed little gem."
– *The New York Times* (US)

"The narrative, translated from the Norwegian by Caroline Waight, plays out as a series of moments and impressions, some polished over time, others as jagged as broken ornaments. [...] By the end, burned hope hangs over these pages like the scent of smoke after a candle's been blown out."
– *Washington Post* (US)

"December is similarly blanketed with snow in the Oslo of Ingvild Rishøi's *Brightly Shining,* a winning holiday tale with just the right proportions of hardship and hope."
– *The Wall Street Journal* (US)

"Rishøi offers a charming, Christmas-themed novella about sisterhood and financial hardship in contemporary Oslo. [...] Rishøi's choice to tell the story from the 10-year-old's point of view proves fruitful, as Ronja conveys genuine hope amid the family's dire circumstances along with hins of wisdom beyond her years. This has the feel of a classic holiday tale."
– *Publishers Weekly* (US)

"The truism that good things come in small packages is affirmed by Ingvild Rishøi's *Brightly Shining*, an unexpected emotional force disguised by its small stature. [...] Like a poet, Rishøi makes excellent use of repetition and distills her story into measured segments, equally denying the maudlin and the saccharine. Yet Ronja's voice is memorable and finely tuned to its surroundings, and readers will ache for her as others step in–for better and for worse– where her father is absent. Despite the darker side to Ronja's story, Brightly Shining radiates hope and goodness, a perfect companion for the holiday season."
– *Shelf Awareness,* Starred Review (US)

"This moving tale, with not a single wasted word, asks how we keep going when hope faded and life's burdens become too much to bear, leaning on the power of imagination and connection to find a way forward."
– *Booklist* (US)

"A heart-wrenching tale of children trying their utmost to take care of each other."
– *Kirkus Reviews* (US)

US – Reviews



Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

Issue: October 1, 2024

Brightly Shining.
By Ingvild Rishøi. Tr. by Caroline Waight
Nov. 2024. 192p. Grove, $20 (9780802163493); e-book (9780802163509)

Ten-year-old Ronja's school caretaker hands her a flyer to give to her out-of-work father. A Christmas tree stand in Oslo is seeking workers. Ronja's father lands the job, and for a little while, things look up for their little family—Ronja, her dad, and her 16-year-old sister, Meliss. But when one of his drinking buddies comes around, their father's back to spending his earn on alcohol. Melissa begs to take over his shift, fitting it in before and after school, and soon

The New York Times

FICTION

These 2 Novels Are Filled With Christmas Miracles

Two families navigate a pivotal holiday season that transforms their lives.

BRIGHTLY SHINING

By Ingvild Rishøi; translated by Caroline Waight

BRIGHTLY SHINING (Grove, 182 pp., $20), by Ingvild Rishøi, translated from the Norwegian by Caroline Waight, is an emotionally packed little gem that's been a best seller in Europe for the past few years and is now finally coming to the United States.

In the Oslo neighborhood of Tryen, two sisters live on the brink of chaos, their world precarious because of their alcoholic father and his constant troubles. The story, which begins at the start of the Christmas season, is t

themselves, but even through her grit, she remains ever hopeful, especially compared with her 16-year-old sister, Melissa.

At the start of the novel, Ronja is alerted by a friendly caretaker to a job listing for a Christmas tree seller. If her dad is hired, it would be a lifeline for their family. The income would mean bills could be paid, the girls could feel proud of their father and maybe the family could even have a real Christmas, complete with a decorated tree. Melissa doubts their dad, who is their solo parent, can do it, what with the pull of the neighborhood bars and his crowd of drinking, peer-pressuring friends. "I don't want to dream like that," Melissa says.

But their father surprises everyone and gets the job. He wakes early and comes home straight after work; they eat spaghetti every night together as a family. Alas, the holiday honeymoon must end. When their father starts drinking again, Melissa takes over his job so the sisters can still have something of a holiday. Lonely at home, Ronja starts to hang out at the tree stand, too.

If, from that, you expect a happy holiday fable of smoothly overcoming the odds, you'd be wrong. In Rishøi's world, consumerism and corporate villainy are acknowledged and even briefly turned on their heads, but, like alcoholism, they prove larger obstacles than any one well-meaning person can fight alone. As the story unfolds, your heart aches for the girls — but also for all of us in this world we've built, where money too often means more than kindness.

And yet, there are small joys to be found, and a dose of Christmas magic is delivered too, with an assist from the "finest Fjord spruce in Etnebakk" and a devastating storm that sweeps through the town. Is this heavenly enchantment, or simply people coming together and doing their best, despite the odds, and without any guarantee of success? Or maybe these are one and the same, the true magic being our ability to keep hoping, keep caring, in light of everything else. As the caretaker tells Ronja, "Miracles do happen.

KIRKUS REVIEWS

BOOK REVIEWS NEWS & FEATURES

REVIEWS > FICTION

BRIGH

BY INGVILD RISHØI | TRANSLATED

A heart-wrenching tale of chi

SHOP NOW

+ BOOKSHELF

A Christmas story about a 10-year-old Norwegian girl who

"Hello, two motherless children and an alcoholic here, can you please give that Melissa resorted to just once, according to her little sister, Ronja. It's t hidden—from the neighbors, from the schools, and even from themselves. season when, ever so briefly, their father dries out and gets a job as a Chri apart. As he disappears into bars, Melissa takes over his job, doing the wor Soon, her coworker Tommy brings Ronja in to convince customers to buy split the commission. She hawks them, saying that "all proceeds go to child and Tommy's soon-to-be-born child. But Ronja is too young to be working kept secret from the owner. Though the sisters love their father, he's unable in the fridge, so they're desperate. But as much as they hope no one sees t scant few try to help: There's Aronsen, the across-the-hallway neighbor wh Christmas costume. The caretaker at school who shares his lunch with Ron dad, who f convinced t

Brightly Shining by Ingvild Rishøi

Christmas is just around the corner and Ronja and Melissa's father is out of work again. When 10-year-old Ronja hears about a job at a Christmas tree stand, she thinks it might be the stroke of luck they all need. Soon their father comes home with money and a smile on his face. One evening he says he's going out to buy Christmas gifts, but the daughters know his true destination is his favorite pub.

Determined not to lose their recent good fortune, Melissa takes her father's place at the Christmas

ShelfAWA

enlightenment f

Brightly Shining
by Ingvild Rishøi, transl. by Caroline Waight

MORE INFO

BUY NOW

The truism that good things come in small Shining, an unexpected emotional force d novel's narrator, 10-year-old Ronja. Ronja her father's alcoholism and the instability Ronja wants to believe, but her older siste just been at work then come straight hom go on like this, she thought, and yet it did

When their father fails to keep his job at t and their father, who looms so large in the narrative. He is there, but sporadically—as stumbling down the sidewalk outside Ron needs him to be. Like a poet, Rishøi (tran makes excellent use of repetition and dist denying the maudlin and the saccharine. to its surroundings, and readers will ache for her as others step i absent. Despite the darker side to Ronja's story, *Brightly Shining* companion for the holiday season. —Sara Beth West, freelance reviewer and librarian

Discover: Despite the darker side to young Ronja's story, *Brightly Shining* radiates hope and goodness, a perfect companion for the holiday season.

The Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

'Brightly Shining' is a bittersweet Christmas past

In Ingvild Rishoi's novella, two Norwegian girls with an alcoholic father begin work by.

Charles Dickens didn't invent Christmas, of course, but he left Tiny Tim's crutch lying in the hallway for everybody else to trip over. Since 1843, writers have been limping along after the master storyteller, trying to catch a mugful of his ginger-infused sentimentality. For many of us, there is no shorter line to the tear ducts than a child's imperiled hope for a merry Christmas.

Truman Capote redecorated the tree in 1956 with his tender story about making fruitcakes with his elderly cousin. "We are each other's best friend," the narrator explains as they begin gathering "cherries and citron, ginger and vanilla and canned Hawaiian pineapple, rinds and raisin and walnuts and whiskey and oh, so much flour, butter, so many eggs, spices, flavorings." I don't even like fruitcake, but I crave *their* fruitcake. And that final forlorn paragraph of "A Christmas Memory" — "severing from me an irreplaceable part of myself" — still throbs with nostalgia like a childhood scar.

Rishoi's story tak childhood memo prepares for Chri preference that's household with li by Caroline Waig some polished ov

After school one Christmas Tree S Outdoorsy." On "outdoorsy," so s Naturally, he reg country bumpkin will react when h

Fiction: 'Brightly Shining' by Ingvild Rishøi

Plus 'Time of the Child' by Niall Williams and 'Eclipse' by Keiichiro Hirano

"It was always snowing at Christmas. December, in my memory, is white as Lapland," wrote Dylan Thomas in "A Child's Christmas in Wales." December is similarly blanketed with snow in Oslo of Ingvild Rishøi's "Brightly Shining," a winning holiday tale with just the right proportions of hardship and hope.

GIAM A COPY

Brightly Shining

By Ingvild Rishøi, translated by Caroline Waight

Grove Press

192 pages

BUY BOOK

Translated by Caroline Waight, this short novel is narrated by 10-year-old Ronja, who lives in poverty in the Norwegian capital with her older sister, Melissa, and their inyobezz, alcoholic father. When Dad gets hired at a Christmas tree market, the girls indulge in dreams of a normal holiday—until he takes an advance on his pay and disappears into the corner bar. Melissa takes his position, slaving away in the early morning and after school, and that's when a co-worker, Tommy, has an idea: When the tightfisted manager is gone, Ronja will come to the market and help them sell wreaths and other seasonal decorations on the side. To really bring in buyers, they will claim that the proceeds go to children in need—only a partial lie, since Ronja and her sister will share half the commission.

"We're selling a dream. What our customers are buying here is the spirit of Christmas," Tommy explains as he instructs Ronja on how to bring in passersby. "All I had to do was look skinny and sweet and poor," Ronja learns, and holiday shoppers would be eager to spend. "Brightly Shining" follows Ronja's hustle to its inevitable discovery by the manager and the reckoning that results.

For all of its irony about holiday consumerism, Ms. Rishøi's book never quite gives up on the spirit of Christmas. "I can't not hope," Ronja says, and she finds support for her attitude in warmly portrayed side characters, such as her school's caretaker, who sneaks her lunches, and an elderly neighbor who becomes a surrogate grandfather. Most of all she's buoyed by Melissa, and in the story's magical ending a well-timed snowstorm turns the Christmas tree lot into a winter paradise that the sisters explore together.

US – Blurbs

The US edition of *Brightly Shining* received **outstanding blurbs** from multiple **renowned** authors:

"There is real magic in this charming novel about care, community, and the kindness of strangers. It is a deeply affecting story, beautifully told, that is sure to touch the hearts of many readers."
– Douglas Stuart, Booker Prize-winning author of *Shuggie Bain* and *Young Mungo*

"Deceptively simple, deceptively innocent, told from the perspective of a bright-eyed, too-wise child, *Brightly Shining* has the power of a classic. You will read it in a single sitting, then carry it in your heart."
– Claire Messud, author of *This Strange Eventful History*

"*Brightly Shining* feels fresh as spruce needles and ancient as bedrock. The clear and hopeful voice of Ronja slips easily into your heart and takes up residence like a breathless memory, like a song of unbearable beauty. I want to read more Ingvild Rishøi, and the sooner the better."
– Leif Enger, author of *I Cheerfully Refuse*

"Ingvild H. Rishøi's *Brightly Shining* is a dazzling contemporary fable of hardship and grit about two sisters who refuse to lose hope. Curl up with it for instant hygge and a warming of the heart."
– Lily King, author of *Writers & Lovers*



