



Innsirkling

Carl Frode Tiller

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Omtale fra Den Norske Bokdatabasen

David har mista hukommelsen, og i ei avisannonse med foto blir venner og kjende oppfordra til å skrive brev til han for å hjelpe han med å finne tilbake identiteten sin. Forteljingane handlar om avgjerande val, feilslåtte ambisjonar og lengslar. Innsirkling 2 (2010) er ei fortsetting av historia om David.

Omtale fra forlaget

David kan ikkje minnst kven han er. Ein annonse i avisa oppmodar nære og kjende til å skrive brev til ham, slik at han kan byrje å hugse. Til saman dannar breva eit flettverk av tekstar der biografien til David, avsenderane, og andre menneske, blir omskrevne og sette på spill. Breva vert forfatta i 2006, men krinsar om fortida. Slik kjem falske von til synes. Ungdomsdraumar, kunstnarambisjonar og planar for framtida. Det handlar om korleis det gjekk med ein generasjon nordmenn, om kjønnsroller og statusjakt, identitet og spørsmålet: Kva er eit liv, korleis skipast ei livssoge under påverknad av andre si historie? Dette er den tredje boka til Carl Frode Tiller og kan hende hans fremste. Som alltid er forfattaren ikkje minst god på små flater. Det sære mellommenneskelege spelet, samtalen som blir til krangel, det dårlege samvitet som kjem når ein vil godt, men ikkje gjer det.

Innsirkling Details

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Louise Johanna says

Dere ga meg altfor høye forventinger folkenz. Men likte den likevel ganske godt. Jeg kunne ønske jeg kjente David og hadde min egne lille oppfatning av han.

Robert Wechsler says

This was simply too Norwegian for me, that is, too naturalistic, too, for example, wedded to making dialogue just as boring as it is in real life.

Maria les(k)e(d)rik(k) says

gir perspektiv på hva du tror/hva du vet

Jonathan Pool says

The underlying premise of this first book, in the trilogy, is excellent. Ostensibly amnesia leads to various 'witnesses' to give their personal account of David's life as a young man.

What is factual and what is embellished does not get revealed by the end of this book one.

Jon, Arvid and Silje are the primary narrators, each given a turn to recall families and events from a particular time.

Jon is particularly well drawn, with numerous phobias, secrets, anxieties. Silje's perplexing dialogue with her husband, Egil, is just that: perplexing.

The realities of family life are explored by Tiller. Marital strife, sexuality and uncertainty, sibling rivalry, old age and illness. It all adds up to a rather stark appraisal of small town life.

Encircling keeps the readers interest largely as a consequence of what is yet to be revealed.

I certainly expect to read part two in the near future.

Jasi says

Mithilfe von Briefen von seinen Freunden und seinem Vater, soll es David wieder gelingen sein verlorenes Gedächtnis zurückzugewinnen. In diesen Briefen schreiben seine Angehörigen über die schönen und weniger schönen Momente seines Lebens. Dazu gehört nicht nur seine kurzzeitige Faszination für den Totenkult und Philosophen sondern auch sein, nicht immer leichtes, Familienleben. Man liest aber nicht nur über David's Leben sondern auch das aktuelle Leben der Schreibenden.

Sowohl der Titel des Buches als auch der Klappentext haben mich angesprochen, weshalb für mich klar war dass ich das Buch unbedingt lesen musste. Leider hat mich dieser ein wenig in die Irre geführt, da ich mir dachte ich erfahre wie es aus David's Sicht ist sein Gedächtnis zu verlieren und plötzlich nichts mehr über sich selbst und seine Vergangenheit zu wissen. Dem war nicht so, doch trotzdem konnte mich der hochgepriesene Carl Frode Tiller mit seinem Buch begeistern. Das Buch gliederte sich in drei große Teile, der Erzählung seines besten Freundes, seines (nicht biologischen) Vaters und seiner besten Freundin mit der er auch eine Beziehung hatte.

Besonders fasziniert haben mich die zahlreichen, bunten Charaktere. Es fiel mir als Leser sehr leicht, mich mit ihnen zu identifizieren, da alle sehr tiefgründig beschrieben und dargestellt werden. Interessant war auch, dass manche der Personen in mehreren Sichtweisen erschienen und in den Augen der unterschiedlichen Personen auch anders dargestellt wurden. Sehr spannend! Auch David wurde in den verschiedensten Lichtern dargestellt und obwohl seine Lebensgeschichte dargestellt wurde, habe ich nicht das Gefühl ich würde ihn am besten kennen. Durch die Beschreibung seiner Freunde, lernt ich viel mehr über diese beschreibende Personen als über ihn selbst.

Der Schreibstil von Carl Frode Tiller geht sehr stark in die Tiefe und wird als Meister der Psychologie bezeichnet. Zweifellos ist sehr gut überlegt was und worüber er schreibt, während er aber nicht auf schwere Fremdwörter zurückgreift sondern mit klarer, einfacher Sprache erzählt. Das lässt die Briefe auch sehr viel realer und authentischer wirken. Das Thema Gedächtnisverlust, finde ich sehr interessant aber darauf ist man in diesem Buch leider gar nicht eingegangen. Das finde ich sehr schade, schließlich war das einer der Hauptgründe wieso ich dieses Buch lesen wollte.

~ FAZIT ~

Die Geschichte war sehr interessant und es war spannend so viele unterschiedliche Charaktere kennen zu lernen, mit denen man sich identifizieren kann. Leider hatte ich mir eine ganz andere Geschichte unter dem Klappentext vorgestellt, weshalb meine Erwartungen nicht ganz erfüllt wurden. Dennoch vergebe ich vier Sterne und lege euch das Buch ans Herz, wenn ihr an faszinierenden psychologischen Profilen interessiert seit.

Lauren says

An incredibly well written novel that made me question everything-identity, memory, truth. It sounds heavy, but it is so well written I didn't get bogged down. Great discussion in my book club about this one. We can't wait for the second book to be published in English!

Kine Javiera says

Tiller skriver skikkelig bra! Men hvorfor høres det ut som om alle personene tenker med samme hjerne?

Jakob says

The Art of Attention

The premise of the novel and trilogy: David has ostensibly lost his memory, and has placed an ad with his picture in the local newspaper of the town he grew up in, with his psychologists urging people who know him to contact him to help him learn who he is and regain his memory. Three people respond: Jon, his closest friend (and lover) in high school, now a mid-thirties musician whose career and relationships are on the edge of falling apart; Arvid, a former vicar and David's stepdad, now awaiting his death; and Silje, his high school girlfriend, presently trapped in an unhappy marriage.

The book is divided into three relatively equal parts dedicated to each of these narrators, and the narrative structure jumps back and forth between the letters they send David and episodes that are occurring in their present lives. The center of this labyrinth, David, is conspicuous by his absence, and he leaves it to his correspondents to 'encircle' him, recounting his teenage years in the late 80s in Namsos, a coastal sawmill town in the middle of Norway. In other words, with the central character offstage and the others left to tell his story, the scene is set for a Rashomon-like interplay where the same events, relationships and motivations are described in different lights from different vantage points. It would be tempting to take this gimmick too far and give wildly contradictory accounts of dramatic events in a way that would undermine belief in anything that's told, but Tiller doesn't fully give in to that temptation. Instead, it's the valor of relationships are described slightly differently, people's personalities, the motives behind their actions. And more visibly, the episodes that the different writers choose to focus on, hinting at a motivation to highlight certain sides of the past and themselves and leave other things untold.

Tiller is a master of capturing those little details of human interactions and psychology, many of which feel uncannily – sometimes embarrassingly – familiar. At the heart of this book is an exposition of failures in communication and the tiny little ways in which we fail each other; how a person forced into a corner will almost involuntarily hurt those close to them. There are lots of quarrels throughout this book, overt and covert, and many charades being played out between siblings, spouses, and former lovers. Tiller's eye for detail sometimes results in almost uncomfortable reading, but luckily this tool is used in the service of many instances of absurdist humor as well.

More than the humor, what redeems or brings warmth to this story are the instances of genuine warmth and love. Memories that with time have grown fonder through the purification of nostalgia. And that's at the heart in this story: our identity isn't something that merely exists in isolation, but is made up by the pieces of us that take shelter in the the minds of those dear to us:

«Når det ikkje lenger finst nokon som kan dokumentere livet vårt, når det ikkje lenger finst nokon som kan fortelje dei muntre historiene om kor sta eller morgongretne vi er, når vi ikkje lenger har nokon til å le når vi er morosame eller blir sinte når vi er sure, når vi ikkje lenger har nokon til å minne oss på kven vi er, og når vi ikkje lenger har nokon til å oppmuntre oss til å vere den vi kan vere, da går vi i oppløysing og blir borte.»

(«When there is no longer anyone who can document our life, when there is no longer anyone who can recount the cheerful stories of our stubbornness or how grumpy we are in the morning, when we no longer have someone to laugh when we are funny or get angry when we are sullen, when we no longer have someone to remind us who we are, and when we no longer have someone to encourage us to be the one we can be, then we dissolve and become lost.»)

In essence, this is what these letters are trying to do for David. As you may have guessed given the premise of the book, the question eventually arises as a reader whether David is really suffering from amnesia at all. It is eventually revealed that David has always had something of a theatrical, authorial streak, and a taste for the uncompromising. Could he have staged this for other reasons than wanting to restore a failing memory? This sneaking suspicion is left unaddressed until the last narrator, Silje, gleefully poses this question on the

very last page of the book, concluding that she views it equally likely that the memory loss be genuine or staged.

The town of Namsos almost emerges as a character of its own throughout the novel, and this is very much a tale of coming of age in a peripheral town of Norway. The teenagers put a lot of energy into rebelling against this stale and odd town, longing toward places of art and culture. And there's a lot of oddness in this town indeed. But still, beneath the sarcasms and rebellion, a kind of tenderness shines through as well. This reminds of the scene in *Lady Bird* where she's told her descriptions of Sacramento convey a clear love for the place, by which she is surprised. At a loss for word, she concludes, "I guess I pay attention." It would seem Tiller pays attention too, to the beauty in the mundanity of his town.

"... det er i dei stille glørne det er varmast, David, ikkje i dei ville flammene, og slik er det med lykke også, ho er å finne i kvardagen."

(«... it's in the quiet embers it is warmest, David, not in the wild flames, and so it is with happiness too, she's to be found in everyday life.»)

Neil says

I find myself completely conflicted regarding how I feel about this first instalment of the Encircling trilogy. It's a fantastic premise for a story. David is a man apparently suffering from amnesia. His doctor's ask that people who know him write down their memories of him with the idea that these will help him regain his memory. What we then get is three people recording their memories of David, one at a time, with the letters they write mixed together with their own personal life. It rapidly becomes clear that all may not be quite as simple as it appears at first. Cracks appear as one narrator's story contradicts or questions another's. Nothing is resolved in this first instalment, but the scene is set. Alongside letters to David, the personal lives of these people reveal the realities of family life. It has to be said the focus is almost entirely on the way family life goes wrong. Marital difficulties, kids struggling to come to terms with their sexuality, terminal illnesses - all these play a part.

But there is a lot of interesting things happening. Jon's story asks us how we can believe a view of David when people are so continually adjusting their behaviour according to how they think others will interpret their actions. Arvid's story asks us how real the picture we have of a person is when so much of what that person is is shaped by the actions of others not just themselves. Silje's story asks us how we can believe a story about a person when it is so simple to build an alternative story that fits the facts but is completely wrong.

This all sounds fascinating. And as an idea, it is. I felt hugely let down by the execution. Firstly, all the people in this story are incredibly unpleasant. That's not a reason for necessarily disliking a book, because unpleasant people can be the most interesting ones. But I could not engage with any of the protagonists here. Secondly, and more fundamentally, I found the writing style very aggravating. I don't want to give details of why because there are things that annoyed me that others may not be bothered by unless I draw attention to them and that could spoil the book for them. But there are writing tics here that had the same effect on me as the multiple, multiple repetition of "says he, Simon" (or similar) in Coetzee's *Childhood/Schooldays of Jesus*

which I really could not cope with. My wife kept asking me why I was groaning so much as I read the book and I found myself scanning down pages to see if it was all going to happen again (which it almost invariably did).

So, lots of stars for idea and subject matter. But lots of negative stars for style. I'm the first to acknowledge that the style thing is personal so it may well just be me that is annoyed by it.

The ideas presented mean that the second and third volumes have an appeal, but I genuinely don't think I can bring myself to go through another two books like that so I'll have to look for plot summaries on the Internet or something like that.

Ken says

You know what it's like to be in the room when a married couple -- most likely your parents -- argues on and on and on about the most inane minutiae? There's a bit of that in play in this book and boy, howdy, does it take its toll as the book drags on.

The concept is promising, anyway. Guy loses his memory. Three different people answer the call to write letters with common memories in hopes that these will provide the "nudge" needed to bring it all back. Amnesia is such a mysterious thing, after all.

This book, impossibly the first of a trilogy (OK, not impossibly--scarily), gives us three different narrators, the amnesiac David's good friend and possible lover (who's the unreliable narrator, after all?), Jon, followed by amnesiac David's stepfather Arvid, followed by amnesiac David and buddy Jon's common friend, Silje. She's also David's girlfriend for a while (or possible girlfriend, if she's to be believed).

These three sections are further bifurcated by parts that serve as the letter to David and parts that are just snapshots from the narrator-of-the-moment's present life (the two in different fonts). In all three cases, nothing big happens. Like I said, all day-in-the-life stuff, much of it filled with bickering and endless talking and self-identified armchair psychological diagnosing as everyone tells everyone else exactly what's wrong with them.

In the final section (toughest of all, maybe), there's actually a 4-page argument between Silje and her husband over what's for dinner. She's serving waffles, damn it, and he finds that beneath him. Strangely, though, he's had PANCAKES for dinner before, he just won't put up with waffles, even if they have the same ingredients as pancakes, and what time is it again?

So, yeah, if you've ever listened to long-married couples make mountains out of molehills, then you might prepare for over 300 pages of molehill expansion in this book. Or not.

Erik Simon says

One of the most astonishing novels I've read in a while. The conceit alone is brilliant (a guy loses all memory of who he is, so those who have known him write letters to him to tell him who he is), but the execution was breathtaking. And up unto the penultimate paragraph, I had no idea how he was going to pull it all together.

But like Alice Munro in her best stories, he pulled it together in that last paragraph in a way that was surprising yet inevitable.

Charles Finch says

From my USA Today review

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Traditional genre novels are so often about the moments when love, no matter how profound, isn't enough to keep us safe. This Norwegian novel, the first in a trilogy that has drawn wide acclaim in Europe, is a beautiful meditation on the subtler ways we fail each other, our quieter forms of grief. It begins with a failing rocker, Jon, bolting from the band that looks like his last chance, and then composing a letter to the companion of his adolescent years, David. Why is he narrating their history? It turns out David cannot remember his life – in the book's next two sections, his stepfather and a second friend, Silje, write similar accounts. Characters appear in radically different light in each, anecdotes taking on new meaning through new tellings. And the mystery of David's own path lingers. It's thrilling to know two more books will arrive to tell its story.

Adam Dalva says

Fascinating concept for a novel, the first of a trilogy: the lead, David suffers from total amnesia, and his doctors ask various people in his life to write him about their experiences with him. It's wonderful watching David's (strange) character be assembled Rashomon style from the three narrators' letters, since the voices are so different, brilliantly embodied by Tiller's flexible use of first person.

The breakthrough here, I think, is that there are really SIX voices here, three reliable, three un-. We get honestly-told glimpses at each character's life, and see the contrasts between their struggles and the facades they send to David. Each narrator has their own ample motivation to lie to him, and the desire to knock the other two down. The first section, Jon's, is by far the strongest, with twists and turns I wasn't expecting, but the second, Arvid, has its own tragic element that's worth reading.

When this is good, it has the strangely addictive tendency of Knausgaard (the Norwegianness is apparent; lengthy pancake sequences are becoming de rigeur these days), but despite some (late draft, I assume, trying to get ahead of the problem) structural gymnastics, the third voice's dilemma is too similar to the first, and things start to drag as we trod already-told ground. After flying through the first half, I found myself stymied, but the fundamental mystery of David's identity will keep me reading.

That's a bit difficult, though. Unusually, the second volume has been translated by Haveland and is already out in the UK, but isn't due in the U.S. until April of next year. I've ordered it off Abe Books and will certainly keep up with it. It's a masterclass in character, despite its failures of tension.

Camilla says

Hovedpersonen, som lider av hukommelsestap, er tilstede i Innsirkling kun gjennom andres fortellinger og minner. Ved å la 3 fortellere komme til orde, får Tiller frem hvordan situasjoner og mennesker blir tolket ulikt fra person til person noe som kommer tydelig frem når romanen skifter forteller og synsvinkel. Jeg likte godt denne vrien fordi den nyanserer skikkelsene og deres valg mer enn det de 3 jeg-fortellerne er i stand til om seg selv.

Jeg var litt usikker på hva jeg syntes da jeg startet på boken, men det skyldtes kanskje delvis at jeg lyttet til lydbok. Når det er sagt, blir de mange gjentakelsene av "sa jeg", "sa han" osv. i dialogene litt enerverende.

Jakob Okkenhaug says

Tja, skjønner jo hypen. God, men vond, med en herlig slutt
