

FICTION

Poetic fable about loss

Bump

MARIEKE DE MARÉ

Bump is an asymmetrical hill with three rather odd residents: the old woman and the young woman live in two connected houses; the tall thin man in a detached house. The old woman collects marbles and bakes cakes that she shares with the young woman and the tall thin man. The young woman is an astronomer. The man is an artist, but years have passed since he last drew or painted. He takes care of his late mother's dog, a Phalène. With the help of a gardener, the old woman and the young woman plant a shared hedge between their gardens – a dangerous hedge that bears poisonous berries.

A gem of a book that is as fragile and strong as her characters

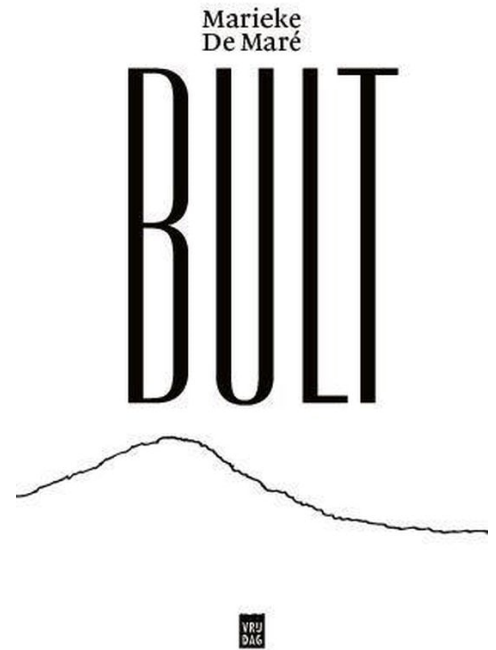
THE LOW COUNTRIES

'Bump' is a poetic fable. Through the triangular relationship between the central characters, it beautifully reveals how difficult it can be to integrate other people into your own desires, and how miraculous moments of connection are. Tender, brief dialogues offer sometimes funny but more often painful glimpses into a past marked by bereavement. Each of the three central characters is dealing in his or her own way with the loss of a mother.

In her debut De Maré articulates sadness and melancholy, as well as longing, in sober, elegant, distilled language. The poignant passages about death and loss are occasionally reminiscent of 'Grief is the Thing with Feathers' by Max Porter, while the narrative style resembles that of 'The Buddha in the Attic' by Julia Otsuka. The design of the book is unique, the different parts marked by an irregular black line representing the crest of the hill, the far from neatly clipped hedge or the pinnacles and depths of the lives of the three protagonists. The white spaces reinforce the book's poetic character and indicate moments of silence.

De Maré has couched pure beauty in words.

HEBBAN



AUTHOR



Marieke De Maré (b. 1985) is a writer, performer, director and teacher. Her poetic prose is characterized by refined visual imagery and an ability to create atmosphere. She manages to incorporate contemporary and recognizable themes into her work. © Paul Willaert

ORIGINAL TITLE: Bult (Vrijdag, 2020, 136 pp)

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