

The art of storytelling

The Whole Nine Yards

MARITA DE STERCK

Joppe and a few of his fellow nursing students organise a mass demonstration against the war in Iraq. In the meantime, he tries to win the heart of the intriguing but independent Alya, but his sick great grandfather Tist throws a spanner in the works. While Joppe chants anti-war slogans, Tist relives his own war. Marita De Sterck accurately describes the anxieties of Tist, which started one night during the war when he was supposed to keep vigil by his little sister's deathbed but fell asleep instead. The disintegration of his family that followed drives him into the war instead of away from it. Tist's wartime trauma results in a lasting fear of abandonment and an incapability to love. A growing awareness that his days are coming to an end makes Tist gentler, more approachable, and ready to reveal old secrets.

An ode to the art of storytelling

ZILVEREN ZOEN JURY

De Sterck combines the stories of Tist and Joppe in a particularly tight composition, which results in an emotional attempt at reconciliation between three equally stubborn generations. Mysterious sagas and legends give the book an eccentric quality and without disturbing the reader. A magnificent tribute to the power and warmth of genuine stories.

A gripping and plausible book, which excites, moves and compels the reader to think

DE MORGEN



AUTHOR



Marita de Sterck (b. 1955) has spent much time travelling the world as an anthropologist, searching out narratives rooted in age-old oral traditions. Recurring themes in her work include learning to love without losing oneself, the power of stories, and the often complex relationship between generations. She has a very recognizable style that plays with registers and does not shy away from direct language. *Photo © Koen Broos*

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