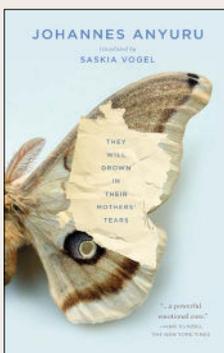


THEY WILL DROWN IN THEIR MOTHERS' TEARS

Johannes Anyuru, translated from Swedish by Saskia Vogel

1. The events that open the novel somewhat resemble the attack on Charlie Hebdo magazine in Paris in 2015. What other political events and contexts does *They Will Drown in their Mothers' Tears* reference? What is significant about the novel splitting into two possible realities?
2. Compare the “official” story of the girl’s past with the version she writes herself and the version the narrator develops. What do these different versions suggest about the novel’s perspective on story-telling and “official” or true history?
3. What connects the narrator, who is a writer, and the girl he first meets at the Tundra facility? How does their relationship change over time, and what role does writing play in it?
4. The girl believes she is a time traveler and experiences many moments of déjà vu, while the narrator writes of a “flaw in time” (pg. 220). How does *They Will Drown in their Mothers' Tears* portray time, and what reasons does it suggest for the breakdown of time?
5. Consider the various forms of Islam in the novel and the role religious belief plays in each character’s life. What does the novel suggest by portraying many different versions of Islam?
6. Anyuru has written elsewhere that literary descriptions of the sky and weather help situate the body within shifting time and space. What significance do seasonal change and weather, especially extreme weather events, have in the novel?
7. What is the purpose of the dystopic or speculative elements in *They Will Drown in their Mothers' Tears*? Regardless of whether the Rabbit Yard exists, what real-world power relations and methods of control does it draw attention to?
8. Describe the novel’s structure, especially its beginning, end, and the significance of each section. What is the relationship between structure and the story being told?
9. While the novel portrays extreme environments and worldviews, the narrator considers the girl and her friends “liminal beings,” caught between worlds (pg. 189). What in-between spaces does the novel identify, and how does it represent the pressures to assimilate and conform?



Published: October 8, 2024

ISBN: 978-1-931883-89-4

eISBN: 978-1-931883-90-0

Paperback | \$16.95

For more information, contact Kelsey McFaul:

kelsey@twolinespress.com

Two Lines Press | San Francisco, CA
twolinespress.com

