



WAITING FOR THE SNOW

BY KAROLINE MENGE



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Warten auf Schnee

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»Let's say we go?«

»It's too cold, also it'll start snowing soon,« I say.

I watch Karine bite her lip until it's bloody.

»But don't you want to know?«, she asks.

»What?«

»Well what's behind the hills?!«

Ever since their mother left, one afternoon in January, the sixteen-year-old Pauli and her adopted sister Karine have had to fend for themselves. Being the elder of the two, Pauli has tried to uphold a daily routine. But the supply of preserves their mother made before she disappeared is dwindling and though it's only November, the horizon already appears rather menacing. After the last of their fellow villagers have left and as the landscape glows with sinister pale green moonlight, that Pauli begins to feel irresistibly drawn to the hills on the horizon. It's the unknown behind those hills that seems to swallow everyone, first their father and later even Powel the tall boy with the peculiar face, the only person Pauli has confided in. In search of an explanation, Pauli's thoughts wander back into the past. Dark stories come to light, her fear of loneliness, the life of an outsider, a vague threat that seems to be coming from within as much as from without. Finally, Pauli realizes that she'll have to take action, and quickly, before the snow begins to fall.

»Waiting for the snow« is a straightforward debut novel. Karoline Menge's precise language creates a dense atmosphere, calm and captivating, nothing short of hypnotic. Skillfully, she employs archaic fairytale motives and weaves them into a modern story that lures the reader deeper and deeper into its uncanny fictional world. With a courageous heroine at its center who overcomes her darkest fears, »Waiting for the snow« tells the tale of a family whose members bring disaster upon each other.

Karoline Menge was born in 1986 in Berlin, then studied literary writing in Hildesheim. Her short stories have been published in a number of anthologies, she was voted second in the Würth prize for literature and in 2015 she received a grant from the state of Lower Saxony. In addition to her work as a novelist, Karoline Menge also writes screenplays. She currently lives in Berlin.

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