



by Björn Kern

C.H.Beck

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Fiction

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The Erotic Talent of My Father

Das erotische Talent meines Vaters

review

Beautifully crafted sentences and an evocative style make this exploration of relationships within a modern, broken family a joy to read. With an unerring eye for detail, Kern portrays single, thirty-something Philipp's visit to his old hippy father. Jakob has been living alone since his wife, Philipp's mother, ran off with a lover. Jakob, though, seems to have encouraged her to go. This is just one of the contradictions hidden beneath the surface and which Kern playfully exploits.

Is Jakob really on his own? Other women come and go, as does the 'Dottore', a male friend. No sooner does Jakob throw them out of the house than the next day they reappear. Jakob claims he craves solitude, yet he throws wild parties for his entourage. Are they just playing games, or do these people really care about each other?

The main narrative is interspersed with episodes from Philipp's childhood and his life in Berlin. He plays the role of go-between for his parents and tries to make sense of the contradictory signals his father's chaotic lifestyle gives off. At the same time, a semblance of intimacy between father and son begins to surface.

This is Kern's fourth novel and promises to be his bestselling to date.

about the author

Björn Kern was born in Lörrach, Germany, in 1978. He studied in Tübingen, Leipzig, Passau and Aix-en-Provence. C.H.Beck published his novels *Einmal nach Marseille* (2009) and *Die Erlöser AG* (2007).

Both novels have gained him numerous honours, including the Brothers' Grimm Prize (2007), the German Literature Fund London Grant (2008), the Heinrich Heine Grant (2008) and the Villa Massimo Casa Baldi Grant (2010). He lives in South Baden and Berlin.

Previous works include:

Einmal nach Marseille (2009); *Die Erlöser AG* (2007).

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