



by Agnes Hammer
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Children's & Young Adults'

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Village Rumours *Dorfleben*

review

In Hammer's new crime mystery for young adults, the reader is introduced to a sinister world of suspicion and violence in the rural German region of the Westerwald.

Nineteen-year-old Mattes, a talented musician, lives with his grandma in a quiet village. Quietness is very important to Mattes because he has very powerful hearing and can't cope with the noise of urban life. At the end of a coach trip one day, the driver uncovers the body of Jakob, an elderly villager, who has been viciously murdered.

This discovery sets in motion a dramatic series of events, as Mattes decides to solve the crime on his own. Digging deeper into the history of the other inhabitants of the village, who have closed ranks to put up a wall of silence, Mattes realises that the murder is linked to events in the last war and conflicts of loyalty which lead to betrayals, blackmail and revenge.

The final show-down provides a very powerful climax to this thoroughly absorbing novel. Told from the point of view of Mattes, who struggles to see himself as more than 'the retard' that others have labelled him, *Village Rumours* will appeal to young adults with its mixture of crime, romance, and history.

about the author

Agnes Hammer grew up with her five siblings in Westerwald in Germany, before she moved to Cologne for her studies in German Literature and Philosophy. Today she works at an institute teaching

young adults from difficult social backgrounds. Since 2005 she has also worked as an anti-aggression trainer. Hammer was recently awarded the prestigious 'Kranichsteiner' scholarship for the exceptional *Herz, klopf!*, published by script5.

Previous works include:

Herz, klopf! (script5, 2009); *Bewegliche Ziele* (Loewe, 2008)

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