



by Judith Hermann
S. Fischer
March 2023 / 192pp
Fiction

🏆 Wilhelm Raabe Literature
Prize 2023

We are delighted that this
book has now been
published in English
translation.

We Would Have Told Each Other Everything

Wir hätten uns alles gesagt

review

A work of subtle, perceptive autofiction from one of Germany's most highly regarded contemporary voices, *Wir hätten uns alles gesagt* marks a turning point in Judith Hermann's work. Though written in her characteristic melancholy, understated style, this series of three interconnected stories taken from the author's own life confronts painful events and emotions head-on, sometimes to devastating effect.

Wir hätten uns alles gesagt was originally conceived as a series of three lectures for the Frankfurter Poetikvorlesungen writing fellowship. The book is given its narrative framework when Hermann encounters her former analyst late one night and sits down with him for a drink. Writing about this unexpected encounter with a blend of subtle humour and nuanced consideration, she proceeds to draw us deep into her own life: her childhood in a dysfunctional family, excursions to a summer house on the Baltic coast, former friendships and relationships, settings that range from the North German seashore to dimly-lit bars in Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg. As well as providing the impetus for the narrative, the period Hermann spent in psychoanalysis with Dr Dreehüs plays a major role in the first section of the book, as do dreams and the theme of female friendship, which is explored, often agonisingly, in her relationship with a woman named Ada.

The final section of the book is something of a departure, examining what Hermann feels to be the influences that have shaped her writing. Much of this is set against the backdrop of the pandemic. As she embarks on a relationship and considers writing a story inspired by her new lover, she deploys a more metafictional approach, which allows the reader to see a clear trajectory from the beginning of the book to where she is now. *Wir hätten uns alles gesagt* is an honest reckoning, a book about learning to cope with life's challenges. It is also an account of undergoing psychoanalysis, revealing the author's inspirations and opening up about some of the darkest, most painful moments of her past.

Comparable to the work of Rachel Cusk but written in Hermann's inimitable voice, *Wir hätten uns alles gesagt* is sensitive, graceful and quietly introspective – beautiful and compelling reading about an author's life and influences.

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Read more on the publisher's website here:

<https://www.fischerverlage.de/verlag/rights/book/judith-hermann-wir-haetten-uns-alles-gesagt-9783103975109>

press quotes

Judith Hermann's books are unswerving explorations of human situations.

Roman Bucheli, Neue Zürcher Zeitung

She has this sound that seems as if it were only approximate and hovering, but in reality it is the result of exact prose: not a word too much.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung

A master storyteller.

The Independent, London

about the author

Judith Hermann was born in Berlin in 1970. She is the author of several short-story collections, including *Sommerhaus, später* (1998) and *Alice* (2009), and highly acclaimed novels *Aller Liebe Anfang* (2014) and *Daheim* (2021), which was a *Spiegel* bestseller and nominated for the Leipzig Book Fair Prize. Her work has been translated into thirty-five languages, including English (*Summerhouse Later*, 2003; *Alice*, 2011; *Where Love Begins*, 2016; all tr. Margot Bettauer Dembo), and a number of short stories have been adapted for film.

Judith Hermann has received several awards, including the Friedrich Hölderlin Prize, Rheingau Literature Prize and Bremen Literature Prize. She lives and works in Berlin.

Other works: *Daheim*, S. Fischer Verlag (2021); *Lettipark* (Lettipark), S. Fischer Verlag (2016); *Aller Liebe Anfang* (Where Love Begins), S. Fischer Verlag (2014); *Alice* (Alice), S. Fischer Verlag (2009); *Nichts als Gespenster* (Nothing but Ghosts), S. Fischer Verlag (2003); *Sommerhaus, später* (Summerhouse, later), S. Fischer Verlag (1998).

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