



by Felicitas Prokopetz
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Fiction

Sitting In The Thicket, Crying

Wir sitzen im Dickicht und weinen

review

A multigenerational tale of motherhood and illness, *Sitting in the Thicket, Crying* is an exciting debut by rising talent Felicitas Prokopetz. Praised for its sensitive handling of complex family relationships, and a light touch that makes it enjoyable despite its weighty themes, this is an Austrian novel with a refreshing style and broad appeal.

Valerie, a single mother of a teenaged son, lives in modern-day Vienna. She has a difficult relationship with her mother, Christina, and tries only to see her rarely. But when Christina is diagnosed with terminal cancer, everything changes: Valerie must be there to care for her mother at the same time as her own son is moving abroad for a year. Faced with the end of one life, as well as an empty nest, Valerie is forced to confront her own past and present.

Narrated in clear, accessible prose, Valerie's first-person narrative takes us on a journey through Christina's illness and the separation of mother and child. The storyline is intercut with third-person fragments that narrate the lives of Valerie's grandmother and great-grandmother before her, moving back and forth not only in time but also between Vienna and Basel. This multi-layered effect is profound, allowing the reader to see how Valerie was shaped by generations of women, while also providing a kaleidoscopic view of gender issues and social change throughout the decades.

Spanning an emotional range from downright funny to tragic, the individual stories of four different women are combined in a smooth and illuminating narrative that benefits greatly from Prokopetz's light hand. Drawing on the trend for multigenerational novels, and unafraid to tackle tough subjects such as cancer, conflict and complex family dynamics, *Sitting in the Thicket*, *Crying* nonetheless avoids a heavy, moralising or overly philosophical tone. Instead invoking contemporary Vienna with a fresh linguistic approach, it leaves space for universal topics and as such is widely relatable. Warm-hearted, compassionate and funny, this is an astute study of motherhood and memory, friendship, love and loyalty in even the toughest of times.

Find out more: [Sitting in the Thicket, Crying \(bastei-luebbe.de\)](https://bastei-luebbe.de)

about the author



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Felicitas Prokopetz studied Philosophy at the University of Vienna, Language Arts at the University of Applied Arts in Leipzig and Literary Writing at the German Literature Institute, also in Leipzig. An author and copywriter, she lives in Vienna.

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