



## Karate Chop: Stories

*Dorte Nors, Martin Aitken (Translation)*

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**Karate Chop: Stories** Dorthe Nors , Martin Aitken (Translation)

**The first book in English by an acclaimed Danish writer: "beautiful, faceted, haunting stories . . . [from] a rising star" (Junot Díaz)**

*Karate Chop*, Dorthe Nors's acclaimed story collection, is the debut book in the collaboration between Graywolf Press and *A Public Space*. These fifteen compact stories are meticulously observed glimpses of everyday life that expose the ominous lurking under the ordinary. While his wife sleeps, a husband prowls the Internet, obsessed with female serial killers; a bureaucrat tries to reinvent himself, exposing goodness as artifice when he converts to Buddhism in search of power; a woman sits on the edge of the bed where her lover lies, attempting to locate a motive for his violence within her own self-doubt. Shifting between moments of violence (real and imagined) and mundane contemporary life, these stories encompass the complexity of human emotions, our capacity for cruelty as well as compassion. Not so much minimalist as stealthy, *Karate Chop* delivers its blows with an understatement that shows a master at work.

### Karate Chop: Stories Details

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## From Reader Review Karate Chop: Stories for online ebook

### Marcus Uhre says

Dorthe Nors gør mig så pisse skrøbelig, Det må være skrivestilen, men jeg er ikke helt sikker. Som en amerikansk forfatter skriver, bliver jeg gennem novellerne mindet om "det spændende og farlige ved at være levende"

Eller som Oprah skriver; enkel og sublim

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### ká?a says

Zatím **jedna z nejlepších knih, kterou jsem kdy ?etla.** Je úpln? jiná než ostatní. Nikdy jsem se s n??ím takovým nesebkala.

**Rozhodn? doporu?uji p?e?íst!**

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### Martin Malík says

Zvláštne poviedky. Krátke skice, akoby na?rtnuté jedným ?ahom. Melancholická atmosféra bola fajn, netradi?ne vykreslené charaktery postáv, cez obrazy, ktoré môžu pôsobi? v prvom pláne nechutne majú ?aro a dávajú jednotlivým poviedkam neoby?ajnú atmosféru. O živote, o momentoch kedy sa ?udia, oby?ajní ?udia ocitajú na hrane. O dobre,drobnostiach a o živote v ktorom sú chvíle, kedy sa láme život sám a spolu s ním aj my. ?akal som nie?o iné, no obsah jednotlivých poviedok ?aleko presahuje rozsah tejto útlej knihy. Treba ?íta? pozorne, pomaly,neponáh?a? sa. Všetko raz bude.Kandidát na moju knihu roku.

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### Lindsay says

I was 50/50 on these stories. Some I was absolutely absorbed by; others seemed to me to resist being read. Ultimately, I think I'm a reader who does well with narrative storytelling, so stories that lack narratives or whose narratives are unclear are slightly confounding to me. "Female Killers," "Do you know Jussi?," and "Hair Salon" are a few examples of stories that simply did not invite me in. "The Buddhist" was possibly my favorite story in this collection (it was absolutely hysterical), and "The Wadden Sea," "She Frequented Cemeteries," and "Karate Chop" were all beautiful, if a little abstract.

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### Alan says

Great bunch of very short, oblique stories about ordinary experiences and some not so ordinary. Sometimes the story emerges after you put it down, and you have to pick it up and read again. I think I'll be reading all these again, and more than once. Flat Danish landscapes add to the atmosphere, but some set in USA (New York).

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## Mia Dall says

En samling af den slags noveller, som jeg ikke bryder mig om. Noveller hvis eksistensberettigelse synes at være sensationen. Noveller som påstår at det sensationelle er interessant i sig selv. Det er en smagsag, vil jeg tro, men jeg synes ikke, det er interessant. Til tider var der gode observationer, ofte var de dog skrevet i et barnligt og naivt sprog, som jeg ikke helt kunne finde nogen stilistisk berettigelse for. Effekten blev at fortælleren ikke respekterede sine karakterer og i stedet fordømmede dem, som om fortælleren ikke kunne se sine karakterer som mennesker, men mere som tekstuelle konstruktioner. Det kan der selvfølgelig være en interessant pointe i, men ikke en, der i Kantslag var gennemført nok til at blive interessant.

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## Roxane says

Oof, these stories are sharp and intelligent and the title story, my goodness, from beginning to end, I held my breath. These stories are reminiscent of Diane Williams or Renata Adler--precise, compact prose, a bit of a fabulist cum realist blend of stories. So much to like here.

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## Camilla Kristensen says

Mellem indholdsfortegnelsen og novellernes begyndelse er der en lille, kort tekst på syv linjer. På disse syv linjer formåede Nors at få mig til at miste pusten - det var minimalistisk, men med en skarphed, der frembragte umådeligt mange følelser i mig.

Novellerne er lige sådan; ikke særlig lange, men skrevet med en skarp pen og med en evne til at sætte gang i følelser. På trods af dette mindede novellerne på ingen måde om hinanden, så jeg tænker, at man sagtens kan læse novellerne ud i en køre, men jeg foretrækker at læse et par stykker om dagen. Der var et par stykker, der ikke sagde mig så meget, men det betyder ikke meget i helhedsvurderingen.

Blandt mine favoritter var Buddhisten, Kvindelige mordere og titelnovellen, Kantslag.

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## jeremy says

*karate chop (kantslag)*, a slim (but hardly slight) collection of 15 short stories, is the first of dorthe nors's works to appear in english translation. the danish author's writing reveals her honed observational skills and keen insight, yet there is something too reserved about her prose. her stories are well-written and frequently intense, but, to me, they are missing a needed ardency or fervor. of the fifteen, the title story shines brightest. nors is also the author of five novels, and given the literary promise exemplified in *karate chop*, hopefully they, too, will soon find their way into an english translation.

*behind that burning desire to color in the drawings lay the creative human's longing to give life, and, not least: to make the drawings her own. in a way, it was like stealing preconceived ideas. the drawing could never be lifelike, and for that reason you reached a point where you began to draw outside the lines.*

\*translated from the danish by martin aitken (adler-olsen, høg, et al.)

## Pete says

Weird, precise, alternately creepy and sparkling short fiction, almost all narrated by emotionally constipated Danish people. Starts slow, tails off a little toward the end into unrelieved dark territory but the stories in the middle third (it's only 80some pages) are really, really good. Will keep an eye out for Nors' name in future, although I hope she lets a little light in.

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## Banushka says

modern dünyada insan olman?n hâllerine de?inen k?sa ama farklı öyküler. iskandinav edebiyat?n?n en sevdi?im yönlerinden biri olan çocuklu?u hat?rlay??, çocuklu?a dönü? bu öykülerde de bolca var. baba-k?z, anne-o?ul ve anne-k?z ili?kisinin bamba?ka biçimlerde anlat?ld??? öyküler çok etkili. ördek palaz?, budist ve karate vuru?u en sevdi?im öyküler oldu. karate vuru?u'nda annelise'in ç?k??s?zl??? ve çaresizli?i, kendini suçlamas? öyle tan?d?k ki, edebiyat?n evrenselli?ini yine kan?tl?yor. depresyon, ayr?l?k ac?s?, geçmi?, ?iddet, hep yan?? yapma duygusu... insana dair ne varsa anlatm?? dorthe nors. murat alpar?'n dancadan çevirisi de mükemmel. öykülerin minimalli?ini tamamen yans?t?yor.

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## Emily says

Tempted to give five stars just for "The Buddhist" and these bits of sentence: "But she had known many men like that. Many men like those reptiles in the zoo that could puff up their faces with fanciful color and raise themselves up onto thin toes and rattle."

But, unfortunately, my feelings about the collection overall are mixed. I very much admire the writing (and translation) which is sort of eerily--even ominously--beautiful.

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## Baris Ozyurt says

“Annelise çocuklar?n, boyama kitaplar?nda boyad?klar? resimleri nadiren ana babalar?na ya da ba?ka yeti?kinlere gösterdiklerini gözlemlemi?ti. Bunun nedeni, büyük bir olas?l?kla, çocu?un boyad??? bu resimlerin, onun yarat?c? yetene?ine de?il, tam tersine, onun en kötü özelli?ine, yani, haylazl???na ve bir ?eyde gerçekten derinle?medeki cesaret eksikli?ine tan?kl?k etmesiydi. Annelise' nin gözü gene Carl Erik' e tak?ld?. Carl Erik gibi biri, yani bir erkek, kad?nlar için önceden dü?ünölmü? bütünün bir parças?yd?. Üstelik, insan?n kar??la?t??? her birey, bir gizil güç, bir taslak, boyanmas? gereken bir resimdi; böylece her ?eye içerik verme olana?? vard?. Annelise, genç k?zlar?n a??r? etkinlik e?ilimi, yani de?i?tirme, kontrol alt?nda tutma ve aç?klama gereksinimi ve bunu gerçekle?tiremeyince de keçe uçlu kaleme sar?l?p çizgi resmin içindeki her ?eyi boyamalar? ba?lam?nda bir ?eyler okumu?tu. Belki bu yüzden dövmü?tü onu Carl Erik. Annelise' nin vücudundaki morluklar, çizgilerin d???ndaki bölgeyi boyaman?n bir biçimiydi belki.”(s.62)

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## **Irene says**

Readathon October 2014

Really great collection of short stories!

The story I liked the most, was the story called 'Karate Chops,' it really made an impression of me and I had a hard time shaking it off again.

I also liked the second story a whole lot, I found it rather sarcastic and it made it obvious to me that this is in truth a Danish book! It's kind of hard for me to explain...

Normally when I read a short story collection, there's some of the stories that I don't like. This wasn't the case here. I only found one story who I wasn't too fond of, the rest were really great.

I'm a big fan of the writing in this book. Absolutely perfect!

A really great book!

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## **Callum McAllister says**

Nearly perfect stories. Contrary to popular belief, not all is well in Denmark. These characters have some pretty deep emotional issues.

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