

Marble

“A resolute novel that, by virtue of its mix of literary suggestion, aesthetic experience and art historical insight, makes something that is simultaneously straightforwardly concrete and almost incomprehensibly abstract come alive.”

– Jon Helt Haarder, *Jyllands-Posten* *****

“*Marble* is not reminiscent of much else, but that does not make it odd. Just beautifully its own. It is made of the stuff art and literature is made of. In excess.”

– Søren Kassebeer, *Berlingske* *****

“Amalie Smith brings marble to life.”

– Ask Hansen, *Politiken* ♥♥♥♥♥

“Candescently cool.”

– *Weekendavisen*

“Admirably vivid.”

– *Information*

“In Smith’s universe, life’s big and small questions are flipped and turned with exceptional artistic dexterity. Images and text often interweave into a strongly unified expression, be it when she delivers a characteristic of marble or examines the qualities of the three-dimensional. Her literary as well as visual work is distinguished by combining strong intellectual reflection on aesthetics, language and life with heart and a voice that touches and moves the viewer/reader.”

– Jury for the Danish Crown Prince Couple’s
Rising Star Award

“*Marble* is an artistically ambitious and original attempt at creating an open, hybrid and ‘impure’ strand of novel which integrates and supplements fiction with factual and documentary elements... Amalie Smith digs into the material with knowledge, sensuality, and aesthetic sensibility.”

– *Litteratursiden*

“*Marble* is a novel about insisting on the significance of surfaces, about longing and absorption, about diving and becoming porous. The book thinks across disciplines and aesthetic genre conventions, and hence it is no coincidence that Amalie Smith is a practising artist as well as a writer.”

– Kizaja Ulrikke Røuthe-Mogensen, *Vagant*

Translated from the Danish
by Jennifer Russell

Lolli Editions

Amalie Smith

Marble

DANIEL FOUND HER IN the ground.

He dug her free and brushed off the dirt. He joined the pieces, logged the pigment traces: how they were distributed across her clothes and her skin. Her blue-green eyes. Her coral lips. He carved new marble and filled the holes where fragments had been lost.

Her name is Marble. Daniel calls her Maggi.

‘Maggi.’

Her body fills with blood that can flow in every direction.

Daniel places her on the bed. He asks what it feels like to be her. She says that her ears are small microphones. When he strokes her earlobe, it sounds like wind through a wind muffler. Now the blood flows to her legs.

Daniel lies down and Marble turns to face him. Her right hand grasps his left thigh, she pulls it across her hip. His left hand closes around her right breast.

She finds his mouth in a darkness that comes from her own closed eyes. A kiss so deep and honest, like slowly opening an abyss with your tongue. Massaging it forth.

Marble pulls back her tongue.

‘Daniel, what do you see behind your closed eyes?’ she asks.

‘Orchids,’ he says and looks more closely. ‘Orchids spread throughout enormous greenhouses. And fluorescent tubes that twist through amber honey. A hand pressing small lumps of charcoal and coral into the sand on a long, white beach. And colours that seep into other colours, quickly and almost imperceptibly.’

‘I see sculptures when I close my eyes,’ says Marble. ‘Ancient sculptures with brilliantly painted surfaces. Not just one colour, but a multitude of saturated colours covering the form. Polychrome. A surplus of colour.’

‘The colour isn’t superfluous,’ says Daniel.

‘It isn’t superficial, either,’ says Marble.

Now the moon casts a window of light onto the floor. Marble gets out of bed and sits on the floor and looks at the moon’s window.

She lights a cigarette and blows white smoke out into the moonlight. The smoke doesn’t smell of anything. She passes the cigarette to Daniel in the bed. They take turns smoking.

Marble with the cigarette pinched against the loose skin between her fingers, the entire palm of her hand beneath her chin.

‘Forms are eternal,’ she says. ‘And materials are eternal. It’s when they meet that time begins.’

Daniel blows a smoke figure that looks like a horse’s head.

‘You can carve a form in marble and let it travel through the centuries,’ he says. ‘It never stops occupying a space in the world.’

‘Yes,’ says Marble and blows at the horse head. ‘But the colour slips off.’