

Counting in Danish: New Women's Fiction Novel Delves Into Grief, Anxiety and Family Secrets



After her sister's tragic death, Jess is forced to confront the world alone for the first time. As she fights to overcome her fears and family secrets are revealed, Jess discovers that Denmark may hold the key to more than just her past...

UNITED KINGDOM - Published on 28th May 2024, *Counting in Danish* is a coming-of-age novel that deals with grief, loss and the heartbreaking reality of losing the person you're closest to in the world.

Counting in Danish follows a teenage girl, Jess, as she's exploring her identity and roots, while grieving the tragic loss of her sister. As the story unfolds, secrets and truths are concealed and uncovered, and the obscure circumstances of Sophie's death are gradually revealed.

Overview:

Losing Sophie is like losing part of herself.

After her sister's tragic death, Jess is forced to confront the world alone for the first time. Always the quieter, more anxious twin, Jess feels lost without confident, risk-taking Sophie by her side.

Struggling with grief and the burden of a guilty secret, Jess begins to hear her sister's voice in her head, and Sophie's words of encouragement inspire her to push herself out of her comfort zone. The twins had always planned to travel together to find their birth father, and with Sophie's support, Jess is determined to make the journey in her sister's memory.

As Jess fights to overcome her fears, and family secrets emerge that she could never have foreseen, she discovers that Denmark may hold the key to more than just her past...

Celia said of her novel:

“I have always been fascinated by how much our genes and family history play a part in who we are as people. Since learning in depth about Danish culture and life I’ve also come to realise the importance of one’s country of birth. So much is innate from the beginning; so much never has to be explained. The traditions and values of another nation, however, can be quite difficult to understand and assimilate when first encountered in adulthood. I’ve explored this idea in my novel, and it is reflected in one of the main themes.”

Published on 28th May 2024, Counting in Danish (ISBN: 9781803782133) is available in paperback (£10.99) and Kindle format.



About the author:

After studying English and Education to degree level and then teaching for many years in Sussex, Hampshire and London, Celia Berggreen retired from teaching to begin writing in earnest. She’d been writing short stories, novels and poetry since she was a child, but life had got in the way and she’d never had the time to devote to it that she’d have liked. She joined The Creative Writing Programme, based initially at the University of Sussex, and threw herself into writing the novel that would become Counting in Danish.

Celia completed the two-year course and then a further year of Advanced Writing Workshops while continuing work on the novel. She was a member of New Writing South and, later, of the Chalk Circle writers’ group. She contributed short stories to Chalk Circle’s 2021 collection ‘Shadows on the Path’, and to the literary magazine Mslexia.

Celia lived in Sussex with her Danish husband, Kristian Berggreen, whom she met on a blind date when she was a single parent juggling three teenagers, full-time teaching and a house move. Happily, he was undaunted, and they married shortly afterwards. With her trademark curiosity and zest for life, Celia embraced Danish culture, and her large, extended family of Danish in-laws and regular trips to Denmark provided some of the inspiration and background for this novel.

In 2022, Celia died of ovarian cancer. She’d continued writing until the cancer treatment got too much for her, starting work on a second novel while seeking an agent for Counting in Danish. Sadly, she ran out of time. She was never to see her first novel in print, or complete the second. Counting in Danish has been published on the initiative of her husband, who was determined that her long-held ambition should be realised.