

Dear reader!

(say: Too-vah) B.F.F.

When I first began working on Tuva's story, I called up my best friends from when I was twelve. We grew up together in the north of Oslo, and spent a lot of time in the little forest next to our school. We played at war with the boys, built huts, and told secrets.



I loved it. I loved being a carefree, uncool kid, and I didn't want to grow up.

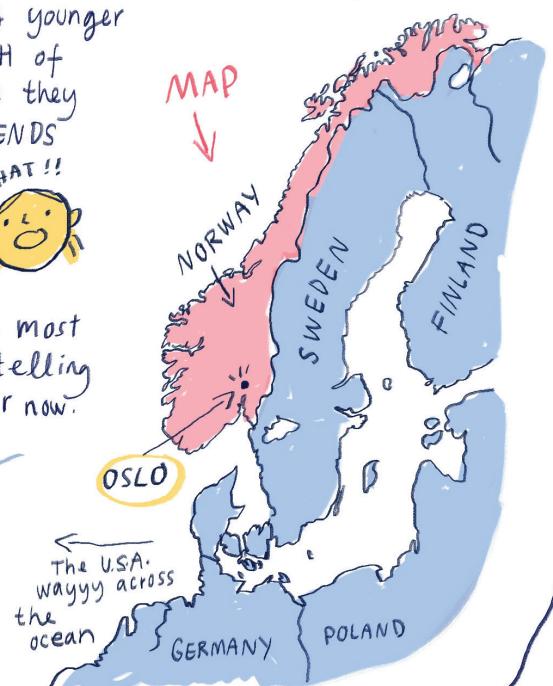
ALL THAT CHANGED WHEN I MET UP WITH MY FRIENDS AFTER SUMMER BREAK. WE WENT TO THE OLD PLAYHOUSE IN MY GARDEN (WE WERE TOO BIG FOR IT, BUT IT WAS THE BEST PLACE TO AVOID OUR ANNOYING YOUNGER SIBLINGS) AND BOTH OF MY FRIENDS TOLD ME THEY HAD GOTTEN BOYFRIENDS OVER THE SUMMER.



The rest of the story in this book is made up. Well, most of it. But I'm not telling any more secrets for now.



Because this story was first written in Norwegian, you might notice some differences between Tuva's life and your own.



such as: SCHOOL!

In Norway, almost everyone goes to public school. Primary school is seven years, so when Tuva starts 7th grade, it is her FINAL year before Junior High. This is a big step for Norwegian kids, because Junior High is where the teenagers go.



You might also notice some smaller things, like how Tuva takes fluoride tablets. Norway has less fluoride in the drinking water than in the US, so we have to take extra fluoride to avoid getting cavities.



But what I've learned from other translations of this book, is that we humans have more in common than we think. Kids in France, Germany, Mexico and Italy also think that going from being a little kid to being a big kid to being a teen is hard. Even my grandma, who was 12 in 1948, said she had the same problems when she grew up, with friends growing apart, falling in love and life in general being a LOT to deal with.

So this book is for you who feel alone in all the madness of growing up.

I'm rooting for you.



from
Nora Dåsnes



(say the å like the a in "fall"
"Dås-ness!")