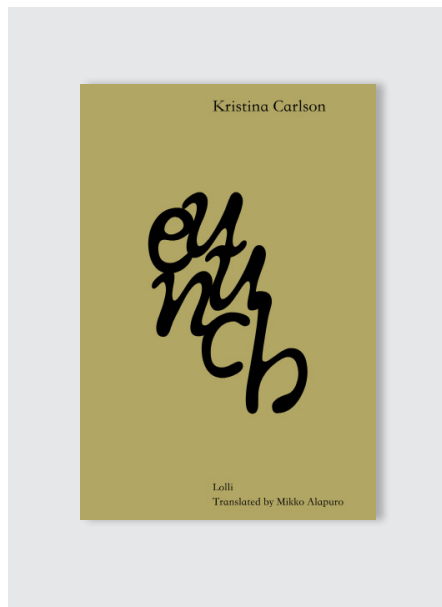


EUNUCH

by Kristina Carlson

Translated from the Finnish
by Mikko Alapuro

*Nominated for the Nordic Council
Literature Prize*



An ageing eunuch, named Wang Wei after the great poet, looks back on his life at the court of the Song dynasty in 12th-century China

Wang Wei has always chosen his words carefully. His unobtrusive presence has seen him through the reign of five emperors, but now, as his own time is running out, he immerses himself in an unbridled account of a life confined at court. From the early separation from his parents, sisters, and brother – who did not survive the operation into a eunuch – to the power struggles he has witnessed and endured, Wang Wei examines human relationships with precision and a catching sense of wonder. While rumours are weapons, it is love and its various forms of expression that most fascinate Wang Wei.

Reaching into a secret and secluded world, Carlson's vivid prose is as delicate as it is enigmatic. A meditation on power and exclusion, love and loneliness, gender and identity, ageing and transformation, *Eunuch* is a compact masterpiece.

Publication: 29 June 2023
Description: 185 × 125 mm
98 pages
Softcover Original
ISBN: 978-1-915267-12-2
Design: Dorte Limkilde
Price: £10.99

KRISTINA CARLSON (b. 1949) is a Finnish writer. Her work has won the Finlandia Prize in 1999, the State Prize in Literature, the 'Tack för boken' medal, and the English translation of *Mr Darwin's Gardener* was longlisted for the DUBLIN literary Award. Both *Mr Darwin's Gardener* and *Eunuch* were nominated for the Nordic Council Literature Prize.

MIKKO ALAPURO is a literary translator and philologist working between Finnish and English.



Praise for *EUNUCH*

»Adeptly using the very particular to get at the achingly universal, *Eunuch* is a short but striking meditation on difference and belonging. Someone who has always lived in-between will recognise that the stages of dusk are just as real as night and day. Elegant and earthy in turns, evoking whole worlds with deceptively simple words, Carlson's writing recalls the aphoristic poetry of her narrator's era «
– Kaisa Saarinen

»*Eunuch* recognises the fragility of the happiness of emperors, idle officials, philosophers, and the rich who care only about their riches. Colourful and corporeal, *Eunuch* is a continuation

of Carlson's deep interest in science and culture – and the way in which an outsider and ageing figure regards the society he both is and isn't part of.«

– *Kiiltomato*

»In this work, Carlson explores loneliness, humanity, and the individual's relationship with society. Its setting in a distant place and time creates a sense of defamiliarisation yet emphasises the timelessness of the ageing eunuch's thoughts. Carlson's clear, precise language is lyrical, often aphoristic, and the verbal snapshots are like Chinese poems or wood carvings.«

– Nordic Council Literature
Prize Jury