



Against Nature: The Notebooks

By Tomas Espedal

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In contemporary Norwegian fiction Tomas Espedal's work stands out as uniquely personal; it can be difficult to separate the fiction from Espedal's own experiences. *Against Nature*, a companion volume to Espedal's earlier *Against Art*, is an examination of factory work, love's labor, and the work of writing. Espedal dwells on the notion that working is required in order to live in compliance with society, but is this natural? And how can it be natural when he is drawn toward impossible things—impossible love, books, myths, and taboos? He is drawn into the stories of Abélard and Héloïse, of young Marguerite Duras and her Chinese lover, and soon realizes that he, too, is turning into a person who must choose to live against nature.

“A masterpiece of literary understatement. Everybody who has recently been thirsting for a new, unexhausted realism, like water in the desert, will love this book.”—*Die Zeit*, on the Norwegian edition

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Against Nature: The Notebooks By Tomas Espedal Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1781127 in eBooks
- Published on: 2016-03-15
- Released on: 2016-03-15
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Review

“Revealing and forthright. . . . A powerful, well-wrought novel.”
(*Complete Review*)

“Espedal’s writing is wonderfully descriptive, flowing freely from one sentence into another. Such a style is fitting for a novel that seems to glide between thoughts as it questions whether society is natural and what should be done about it. Drawing particular attention to themes of work and love, Espedal’s book invites readers to ponder what is natural in life.”
(*World Literature Today*)

“Anderson is an incredible translator. The language is crisp and lucid, with passages that beg to be reread and underlined and read aloud. . . . Gorgeous, profound and exquisitely translated, *Against Nature* has made me an Espedal devotee and I will seek every book that carries his name.”
(*Mark Haber, Three Percent*)

About the Author

Tomas Espedal is the author of several novels and prose collections. **James Anderson's** literary translations from the Norwegian include *Berlin Poplars*, by Anne B. Ragde; *Nutmeg*, by Kristin Valla; and several books by Jostein Gaarder.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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