



# NEW SWEET- DISH BOOKS

FOR YOUNG  
READERS



FROM "PEARLS FOR DADDY"; © SASSA BUREGREN/KABUSA. NEXT PAGE: FROM "THE CROW ORCHESTRA"; © ERIKA KALLASMAA/ALFABETA



In *Pärlor till pappa* (*Pearls for Daddy*), **Maud Mangold** (text) and **Sassa Buregren** (illustrations) take a completely different approach to the sometimes harsh conditions of reality, combining social pathos with artistic sharpness. Maud Mangold's text is matter-of-fact in its narrative tone, while Sassa Buregren's illustrations reflect the small child's feelings when confronted with her father's spell in prison. Beautiful watercolours illustrate little Sonja's road to her father's Away; she has to pass deep holes where dangerous monsters lurk, for example the terrible Mudgrubber.

Just when the darkness is at its peak, Sonja hugs her rucksack to give her courage, and despite the fact that the road is mercilessly long and horrid, she finally makes it. For fifteen blissful

minutes Sonja is allowed to hug and talk to Daddy. Books on important themes sometimes have a tendency to allow the message to take precedence over the artistic expression, but that is not the case in this sorrowful, poetic tale, which is suffused with light at the very darkest moment.

The world of picture books is full of characters, usually children, who long for one specific person or one particular place. A sense of longing for something Different, something more diffuse, is more a part of literature for young people. In *Kraxorkestern* (*The Crow Orchestra*) by **Sari Eliasson** (text) and **Erika Kallasmaa** (illustrations), we meet a nameless and somewhat scruffy crow. She is surrounded by nasty pigeons who set

impossible conditions for her inclusion in their circle. The theme of the book, the individual who is forced to remain an outsider and finds the courage to move on, is expressed in the crow's sudden thought: "Is this the way it's going to be all my life?" The crow longs to be somewhere else, and therefore she sets off into the unknown, heading for Somewhere Else. There she happily finds a new connection.

Powerful watercolours illustrate the urban melancholy and the greyness of the town. It is only when the crow sets off on her own adventures, travelling towards Somewhere Else, that the full-page illustrations sparkle into a veritable firework display of colour – everything becomes brighter and clearer when the crow has the courage to follow her inner voice.