The ISIS Hostage
Ser du månen, Daniel
by Puk Damsgård

Winner of the Cavling Prize 2016

The dramatic story of Danish freelance photographer Daniel Rye, who was held hostage for thirteen months in Syria by ISIS, as told by award-winning writer Puk Damsgård.

For the first time, this book offers a detailed insight into the ordeal suffered by the nineteen foreign male hostages who were held by ISIS in Syria - some of the time under control of their British guards, nicknamed the 'Beatles', and the murderer best known as Jihadi John.

It also offers a rare glimpse into the secret world of the investigation launched to locate and free not only Daniel Rye, but also the American freelance journalist and fellow hostage James Foley.

The story follows Daniel Rye’s family and the nerve-wrecking negotiations with his kidnappers over the ransom, which the family had to gather in order to secure his release. It traces their horrifying journey through impossible dilemmas, while they made sure only a few trusted people knew about the ordeal.

In June 2014, Daniel Rye was the last hostage to leave the prison alive, carrying a message from his fellow hostage James Foley to his family in the US. Two months later, ISIS began killing the remaining British and American hostages - Daniel’s former friends during their captivity.

The ISIS Hostage is a touching and terrifying story about friendship, torture and surviving in prison under extreme circumstances, focusing on one of the most spectacular and tragic international kidnapping cases in recent years. It offers an insight into the people who guarded and fed the hostages, some of whom were a product of the Syrian regime’s prisons, while others were from our own Western societies.

Drawing on European, American, and Arabian history, this book illustrates both how they are linked and how they feed into one of the greatest challenges the Middle East will face in the years to come.

Puk Damsgård (b. 1978) works as a Middle East correspondent for DBC, based in Beirut and now Cairo. She has received several awards for her work, including the Freedom of Speech Award from Jyllands-Posten, the Journalistic...
Including the Freedom of Speech Award from Jyllands-Posten, the Journalistic Award from the Berlingske Foundation, and in December 2012 she was short-listed for the most prestigious Danish journalistic award, the Cavling Prize, for her coverage of the Syrian Civil War.

Damsgård is the author of Land of the Pure (De renes land) and Wolves’ Hearts (Ulvehjerter).