

# Diogenes

Elena Fischer  
*Paradise Garden*

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Original title: *Paradise Garden*



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Roman · Diogenes

Fourteen-year-old Billie rarely crosses the boundaries of her high-rise housing estate. By the end of the month their money barely stretches to pasta with ketchup, but her mother, Marika, lights up Billie's world with her imagination and big heart. One day, however, they receive an unwelcome visit from her Hungarian grandmother, and Billie loses much more than the colourful everyday life she shared with her mother. No longer able to ask Marika any more questions, Billie sets off alone in their old Nissan – she is determined to meet the father she never knew and find out why she keeps dreaming about the sea, even though she's never been there.

»The beginning was the last day before the summer holidays.

The beginning was a song on the radio.

The beginning was big plans.«

Elena Fischer

## Book factsheet

General Fiction  
352 pages  
11.6 × 18.4 × 2.3 cm  
September 2023

World rights are handled by Diogenes

Film rights are handled by Diogenes

### Rights currently sold:

Czech (Prostor)  
Dutch (Meulenhoff)  
English/world (Indigo Press)  
Estonian (Tänapäev)  
French (Gallmeister)  
Hungarian (Helikon)  
Italian (Feltrinelli)  
Slovak (E.J. Publishing)  
Spanish/world (AdN)

### 📌 Bestseller

#7 Spiegel Bestseller

#12 Swiss Bestseller

### 🏆 Awards

- 2024 *Paradise Garden* ist das Debüt des Jahres des Literaturwerks Rheinland-Pfalz-Saar
- 2023 *Paradise Garden* für das »Lieblingsbuch der Unabhängigen« nominiert
- 2023 *Paradise Garden* nominiert für den »Debütpreis des Harbour Front Literaturfestivals Hamburg«
- 2023 *Paradise Garden* auf der Longlist des »Deutschen Buchpreises«
- 2021 »Literatur-Förderpreis« der Landeshauptstadt Mainz für junge Autorinnen und Autoren
- 2021 Finalistin beim 29. open mike

### Praise

#### *Paradise Garden*

»The blurb sounded promising. What followed were hours in which I couldn't put the book down. The young author tells the story of 14-year-old Billie so sensitively...« – Debora Schnitzler / Die Zeit, Hamburg

»For *Paradise Garden* is a road novel in which one is always ready to give the shirt off one's back for the happiness of its characters, or at least the end of their misfortune.« – Katharina Teutsch / Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Frankfurt

»There is a surprising lightness to the quiet sadness that runs through the book, which is repeatedly underscored by witty dialogue and whimsical twists.« – Christine Westermann / Stern, Hamburg

»It is impressive, to say the least, how masterfully and down-to-earth she tells of life in a high-rise suburb [ . . . ]« – Olaf Przybilla / Süddeutsche Zeitung Landkreise, Munich



Photo: Julia Spillmann © Dörmers Verlag

Elena Fischer, born in 1987, studied comparative literature and film in Mainz, where she lives with her family. In 2019 and 2020, she participated in the Darmstadt Text Workshop, led by Kurt Drawert. In 2021 she was a finalist at the 29th ›Open Mike‹ with an extract from her debut novel *Paradise Garden* and won the Mainz provincial government's prize for young authors. Elena Fischer has been nominated for the ›German Book Prize‹ and for the ›Harbour Front Literary Festival's Debut Prize‹ 2023.

### Praise (cont'd)

»*Paradise Garden* is an accomplished debut about the courage to get to know one's own origins and to accept them as they are.« – Ursula Nowak / Deutschlandfunk, Cologne

»This novel is a small miracle - and a big surprise.« – Claudio Armbuster / ZDF, Mainz

»The young author paints the picture of three women who [...] initially have little empathy for each other and only slowly build up understanding and affection after a tragic accident.« – Isabelle Fischer / Nürnberger Nachrichten, Nuremberg

»You want to read more from this author.« – Ruhr Nachrichten, Dortmund

»A really good debut.« – Marietta Bernasconi / WDR 2, Cologne

»[. . .] we will be hearing a lot more from Elena Fischer.« – Helmut Attender / Oberösterreichische Nachrichten, Linz

»Landing the first novel with a renowned publisher and then immediately being nominated for the ›German Book Prize‹.« – Claudio Armbuster / ZDF, Mainz

»Elena Fischer writes so lovingly about sadness that it is comforting.« – Alina Bronsky / (Author)

»In its emotionality, Elena Fischer's coming of age novel is reminiscent of Benedict Wells' *Hard Land*.« – SRF, Zurich/Basel

»A protagonist who casts a spell on you and attests to [Elena Fischer's] gift of perception and great narrative talent.« – Maja Hattesen / SWR Kultur, Stuttgart

»Heartbreaking, sad and hopeful at the same time. Anyone who enjoyed reading Wolfgang Herrndorf's *Tschick* will also enjoy Elena Fischer. « – Karin Waldner-Petutschnig / Kleine Zeitung, Graz

»A complex story about the beauty of life. « – Münchner Merkur, Munich