



Lucia's Eyes (Prose Series)

Marina Sonkina

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The resistance of the human spirit in face of time, disloyalty, and oblivion is the theme of Marina Sonkina's new collection of short stories. Her seemingly naïve and helpless protagonists inhabit disparate social stations, geographical locales and cultures; all are persons displaced in their own lives. But in their struggles for survival, they discover the redeeming and dangerous power of unconditional love – the only weapon available to them. Strange and incomprehensible to everyone, love makes its sudden appearance to an eight-year-old hunchbacked boy in the title story of Lucia's Eyes. As he brings the gifts of his artistic imagination to Lucia, a refugee from the Spanish Civil War, the bleak and cruel reality of Stalin's Russia dissolves into magic ... In "Runic Alphabet" a Polish-Canadian painter plants a tree that brings to life memories of a woman long dead who remains the only true love of his life. In "Carmelita" an aging man from Winnipeg, vacationing in Mexico, falls in love with a young Mexican painter. In "Christmas Tango" a jobless drifter in snowy Montreal discovers tango, inadvertently transforming his own life and the lives of those who come in contact with him. In "Tractorina" a hard-working crane-operator, retired in post-Gorbachev Russia, is driven into a rose-tinted abyss by her stepson. In "Angels Ascending and Descending" a young girl is initiated into the mysterious symbolism of Russian Orthodox church architecture by a priestly man who hardly lives up to the spiritual heights he preaches. Full of unexpected turns and twists, sadness, joy and humour, these stories reflect life, itself always a surprise, and always a miracle. {Guernica}

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