

Russian diaspora literary fiction

Coincidences

Trilogy. 3 Novels. AST. Moscow 2023. approx. 350 pages each

The main setting of the contemporary (2019-2021) portion of the two already finished books is Russia (Moscow) and Belarus (Minsk, Polesie). The historical part of the action begins in 1924 in Belarus, continues in 1926 in Algier, Paris, Moscow. The historical part (1930s-1950s) of the action of the third book (the author is working on it) takes place in Russia (Moscow, the Far East), Belarus (Minsk, Polesie) and Germany. The modern part of the action of the third book – 2022, Russia.

All plot lines are intertwined, forming important cross-links for the ideological and thematic complex of the novel.

Vol. 1 Veronica's Nets

Ancestors who have long since disappeared into the darkness of time affect us much more than we think. However, thirty-year-old Alesya does not have time to think about such abstract things. Working as a nurse in a Moscow hospital, she barely has enough strength to support her family back home in Polesia. But the past is becoming more and more evident in Alesya's character. Her career choice is no coincidence either – her great-grandmother Veronica became a nurse during the First World War and had to make the big decisions in life amidst many dangers. When the son of a deceased nursing patient proposes to Alesya, she asks for time to think it over.

Vol. 2 The Sand Rose

A silver necklace with a sand rose goes to Sonia Artynova as a legacy. And it seems that this coincidence changes everything ... But Sonia does not know that such sudden turns in fate are a family legacy. Her great-grandmother once had to trade Germany for Russia, Crimea for Bizerte, an archaeological expedition for Tuareg captivity, Algeria for Paris... And it's not about wanderlust, it's about responding to evil in an effort to protect the most important values in life. From the 20s of the 20th century the heroes are thrown into the 20s of the twenty-first century, which only at first glance have nothing in common. In fact, then as now, a person must defy fate in order not only to save himself and his loved ones, but also not to lose respect for himself.

Vol. 3 N.N.

"What Anna Berseneva writes is rare in Russian literature - it is upscale entertainment literature that does not require kitsch and has believable characters. The family saga „Veronica's nets" is nowhere near as dark as a book dedicated to history could be - and yet it is honest and presents the past in three dimensions using the example of a family saga."

ALEXANDRA BERLINA

Anna Berseneva was born in 1963. She graduated from the Journalism Department of the Belarusian State University, and later from the Gorky Literature Institute Moscow. She then was associate professor at the Literature Institute. Before she started writing her own novels she published critical and literary articles in literary periodicals. To date, she published more than 40 books in the genre of psychological novels. Total circulation in Russia - about 5 million copies. Fifteen novels have been filmed in Russia. Anna Berseneva is also the author of screenplays for the adaptation of her books and author of original scripts. Berseneva lives in Germany.



THE AUTHOR

sample available

English

Anna Berseneva

LONG SYNOPSISES

Vol. 1 Veronica's Nets

The modern plot line relates to Alesia: Returning from friend's hospitable dacha, Alesia sees a man who is buying a blackberry from a wino. Noticing the girl's gaze, he excuses himself: „To the beggar, give!“ An introduction occurs. Igor, who learns that Alesia is a nurse, invites her to visit his mother, who is in need of medical care. She agrees. The benefits are obvious – she is offered a place to live along with her job. A friendly relationship develops between her and one day Igor proposes to Alesia to live with him. The girl takes a pause to think. And with this she leaves for Pinsk, to her parents and her son from an affair with a married man who had seduced young Alesia. When Alesia rushes to find her son lost in the marshes of Polesie, she navigates the terrain as if she inherited her great-grandmother's topographical memory. She finds him with a fishing rod on a hard spot, not daring to take a step because the swamps are all around. When they return home together, Alesia realizes that she will not marry Igor.

The historical plot line relates to her great-grandmother Veronika: In Bagnici, a farmstead located in Polesie, where the sea of Herodotus once was, near Pinsk, in the family of a Polish nobleman lived a girl Veronika, who was raised by two elements: the cultural – the father's, associated with Latin, philosophy, poetry, and the natural – associated with oral folk art of Polesie. Meanwhile, during World War I, Veronika leaves her college studies in Minsk and goes to work in a hospital as a nurse. There she meets a young Polish man, who proposes marriage to her. She accepts him, but leaves the connection for the time when her work at the hospital is over. And that time comes during the civil war. The groom, through her aunt, gives Veronika money for an escort to take her across the border. The escort man, Sergei, is wounded during the crossing. Veronika does not leave him. She saves him at the expense of her marriage. She takes him to the house where she rented a room trying to rescue him. When Sergei proposes to Veronika to leave for Moscow she is dissolved in love but also understands that Sergei holds some kind of great position in secret service. Soon it becomes clear to Veronika will not link her life with a man whose hands are splattered with the blood of innocent people. Sergei tries to explain, but has no right to give away the secret that he is a spy, working in intelligence.

Just like her great-grandmother, Alesia does. Once being among a crowd of protesters against the arbitrariness of the Russian authorities, she gives first aid to a man who has had an attack of epilepsy. She is helped in this by a man, Zhenia, who turns out to be an employee of an international company „Doctors Without Borders“. Alesia suggests to hide for a while and to go with her to Bagnici. A harmonious relationship develops between them, in which there is also a place for her son. In Bagnici they find the statue „Veronichka“ carved out of wood. The fact that the figure was preserved in the attic of the Bagnici house, turns out to be related to the great-grandmother, who is so similar to Alesia, reminding of the abyss of life, of the darkness of its impenetrable. Returning to Moscow, Alesia realizes that Evgeny, with whom she was bound by passion, does not consider her and her son as a future family. And she puts a period to their relationship. She rents an apartment outside Moscow. She is saved from a rapist by Evgeni, who only upon returning home suddenly realizes that he can't live without Alesya. But she has already moved out of her dangerous rented apartment. Evgeni picks up all the connections and in the end finds his beloved.

Anna Berseneva

Russian diaspora

Vol. 2 The Sand Rose

The modern line is connected with Sonia: her life is like anabiosis: she is not deeply touched or affected by the kitten handed to her by the neighbor boy; nor by Maxim, the man with whom Sonia spends her free time; nor by her work in a business literature publishing house; nor by social and political events. And even the meanness of her partner, who was frightened and did not protect Sonia from the thief who threatened her life, does not cause her strong feelings. Sonia wasn't like that before. But for eight years now, she has been like a blindfolded and ear-blinded person. The reason is the burn of her first love. Her chosen one was Boris Shakhovsky, a gloomy, handsome man and director of the Shakhovsky Publishing House holding company. A rich man of intelligence, brilliantly educated, he, unable to counteract the system, was forced to cover the false elections positively. Unable to forgive himself for this, he lashes out at Sonia and literally crushes her. During the pandemic, the parents of Sonia die. By taking a job as a nurse at a covid hospital where her brother and his wife Alesia are working, Sonia regains the meaning of her life. While working, she meets Roman, who is literally dragged out of the afterlife by doctors. And she decides to help her brother and his wife by bringing their son from Minsk. In Belarus, Sonia discovers that evil has tipped the scales. The regime's massacres of peaceful citizens who prefer freedom and democracy are tantamount to a slaughter of orcs. But all is not well in Russia either: the police think they can arrest Alesia, who is eight months pregnant, just because she does not have a passport: it was stolen. In the midst of the fear that the old life will no longer be, that one is helpless in the face of mass evil, Sonia becomes ill. She is helped by Roman who rescues her and Alesia during a police brutality. He turns out to be the man in whose presence Sonia feels safe and secure. Love flares up between them.

The historical line is connected with Sonia's great-grandparents Ksenia and Sergei: Xenia buries her mother, who died of consumption at a resort in Europe. Her father takes her to Crimea. But from there they are forced to flee with the Red Army commissars. The father is an archaeologist. He gets the French Society of Archaeologists to sponsor excavations in western Sahara. When he suddenly dies there Xenia is left alone in the Sahara. Alone with the eternal sand. When she is rescued from the hands of Tuareg brigands, she realizes that she has fallen from one captivity to another. The Tuareg want to sell her as to a port brothel. A Russian wanderer, Sergei, intercedes for her, and they sail off to El Jezair. Sergei buys her documents. A spark flares up between Ksenia and Sergei. But, as the girl later realizes, Sergei's passion is more a release of tension than love. He shuns the girl, while at the same time caring for her. They arrive in Paris together where they enjoy some weeks. Before Sergei tells her that he has finally solved all his problems and tomorrow they will leave for England, where Sergei spent his childhood, Xenia is approached by the Russian secret service who want her to return to Russia. The option of not taking his „wife“ with him is impossible for Sergei – the NKVD knows what and who can be manipulated. First they unload in Minsk where they meet friends and where Xenia finds out that she is pregnant. Back in Moscow they are lodged in a service apartment, where the janitor and the driver are watching them. Sergei gives Xenia some information that she may one day use to possibly save themselves. While Xenia gives birth to a son, Sergei disappears for ten years. Coming back he confesses to her that he is, in fact, a murderer, that she should give up on him completely. But Xenia confirms her love, saying that she is ready to follow him even to hell. Sergei disappears again trying to help his friend in Belarus who is tortured by the NKVD. At the end Xenia blackmails the NKVD with the special information she has got about the activities of the NKVD organs in Europe. They tell her that Sergei is in Ussuriysk. The necklace with a sandy rose that Sonia inherits from Ksenia, had once been chosen by Sergei as a gift to Ksenia.

Anna Berseneva