

literary fiction

Ilget. Three names of fate.

Novel. Arsis Publishers. Moscow 2013. 500 pages

Big Book Award shortlist 2014
NOS Award shortlist 2013

Publishers: Bulgaria - Labyrinth, English - Glagoslav

In ILGET, as in its companion novel MEBET, the author does not treat the Siberian Taiga in the high north of Russia merely as an exotic background, his interest lies in exploring the rituals of the northern people and their mystical beliefs, asking the old questions about existence, happiness and the loneliness of man. And yet again, this is not a classical saga of inflexible heroes and predictable fates and fortunes; we are presented instead with a modern novel of magical realism with versatile heroes who challenge their destiny. Like on a movie screen we witness gods and demons, pledges and profanity, love and blood bonds, supplications and rituals. And at the end we realize that there is only a small step separating us from those savages – for, after all, we are all human beings.

We follow a small, puny man who begins to take his life into his own hands. Separated from his tribe as a child, despised and tormented for his weakness, Ilget later leads his own tribe and takes them on a path of revenge. Revenge for his lost childhood, the loss of his twin brother and the loss of the love of his life. But Ilget's journey is also one of leniency and mercy for the sick and weak. At a particular juncture Ilget decides to leave the river of his preordained destiny, for on the other side of the Yenisei river there is another life and other countries. The Siberian gets to know Mongols and Arabs. It is not, however, his intention to change his life for another, rather he hopes in foreign lands to find the key to his own existence.



THE AUTHOR

translations
3 languages

awards

Yasnaya Polyana Award 2016
Big Book Award shortlist 2014
NOS Award shortlist 2013

other works

Mebet

"In this novel psychology and mythology dance hand in hand ... combined with Homeric-biblical wisdom." *Aleksandr Chantsev*

"Fantastic. And most interesting is the fact that fantasy here leaves the impression of real authenticity, as if it was a documentary-realistic text." *Nikolai Aleksandrov*

"Braving the commercially suicidal subject of 'northern ethnicity' for a second time and even though he uses the same material, Grigorenko successfully manages to produce a completely new novel that in no way resembles MEBET." *Galina Yuzefovich*

Grigorenko was born in Novochoerkassk, south of Moscow but has spent practically his whole life in the depths of Siberia. Since completing his studies at the Kemerovo University of Cinema and Photography he has worked as a journalist for the East Siberian bureau of Rossiyskaya Gazeta. Grigorenko lives in the Krasnoyarsk area.

Aleksandr Grigorenko