

authors list

scifi

- * Maximov, Max
- * Rus, D.
- * Valetov, Jan

fantasy

Akella, G.
Perumov, Nik

horror

Bobyleva, Darya
Ivanov, Aleksei
Maximov, Max
Parfenov M.S. et al
Rubanov, Andrei
Starobinets, Anna

rights list

scifi fantasy horror

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topseller
youtube channel

contact

Thomas Wiedling
t | +49-89-62242844
m | +49-174-2759072
thomas@wiedling-litag.com

authors

Wiedling Literary Agency
Pappenheimstrasse 3
80335 Munich, Germany

scifi

news updates

news.wiedling-litag.com
awards.wiedling-litag.com
topseller.wiedling-litag.com

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Russian science fiction

Apocalypsis³ To Mars! The Good Man Inversion of Life

Science fiction. Eksmo Publishers. Moscow 2019-2022.

Maximov's novels deliver science fiction in the best tradition of the Strugatski brothers. After a long predominance of purely entertaining genre literature such as fantasy, horror or post-apocalypse, in Russia his books are seen as an original revival of philosophical science fiction. They are also timely parables exploring guilt and innocence, hell and paradise, life and spirit, nothingness and the morality of algorithms.

As though in parallel worlds or in different dimensions, the reader is taken along two plots lines which at first glance do not seem connected in any way. The connection only becomes clear in the course of or towards the end of the story. This alternation between parallel plotlines has become a trademark of Maximov.

"Oh man, a popular video blogger is writing novels... What's that going to be like? Well, I'm glad to be mistaken... His books have filled my inner world with darkness... And I got hooked on this one, soaking it up at night on my tablet screen... And every time I reach the end, he turns the whole story upside down and everything I thought while reading... Bravo!"

"If there is something missing in your life, something to turn your head and shift your perception, if you don't want a trivial plot, but surprises, sudden turns, if you want to feel something new while reading a book – then this is the book for you ... this is something real, something new in modern literature. It's a synthesis of fiction, an attack of post-modernism and the energy of experiment."

"The author combines all the right elements to make you want to read, together with the real hardcore of a sick fantasy. The plot is so confusing that it makes no sense to even speculate on how the story will end. And the hero himself turns out to be surprisingly alive and real, that you believe him... TO MARS! is not a run-of-the-mill novel, but a unique and living confirmation that Russian literature is quite alive."

LIVELIB Reviewer



THE AUTHOR

4.3 Mio YouTube followers
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audio GATE TO HEAVEN
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awards

2021 Aelita Start Award
2021 Young Adult Content Award

sample translation available

full English for 3 novels

Max Maximov was born in Moscow in 1986. After high school, he first studied at the National University of Science and Technology MISiS, but was expelled for non-attendance. He switched to the Moscow College for Geodesy and Cartography and worked as a surveyor for eight years after graduating. At this time, he took up sports. He achieved a black belt in Aikido and became the winner of the Chekhov Cup in Karate in the Kumite section. In 2015, he started a YouTube channel called MaxMaximov. Currently the channel has about 4.3 million subscribers with more than a million daily views. In 2016 he started writing novels that immediately became self-publishing sensations with about 100,000 downloads per year. Since then, his work has been his YouTube channel and writing new books. He likes to play guitar and loves hardcore music. Maximov is married, has two children and lives with his family in Moscow.

Max Maximov

Russian science fiction

Apocalypsis³

GATE TO HEAVEN

Scifi/ Post-apocalypse. Eksmo. Moscow 2019. 180 pages

2.7 Mio listenings of audioversion

available in full English

Anton is raising a handicapped child by himself. In order to pay for the nursing robot and also to save up for lifelong support, Anton works as a hitman. His daughter doesn't know anything about it and also doesn't know that her father has incurable lung cancer. Then Anton's last mission goes wrong, he is arrested, his daughter is left alone with nursing robot Bob-3. Exactly at that moment, life takes a dramatic turn: higher forces intervene in the fate of the planet. For a short time, all humans become immortal and the resurrected dead populate the city – so that the angels of death of the Last Judgement can catch all the guilty ones. The innocent, however, will not be touched, but can freely decide how long they want to continue their life on Earth before they knock at the gate to heaven. Anton's daughter is a good soul. But she doesn't want to go to paradise without her father and Bob-3. Convinced of her father's innocence, she makes her way through the cadaver-filled streets to the prison with Bob-3. There the cruel truth awaits her. Her father succumbs to his cancer. Bob-3, irreparably damaged in the chaos, wants to die a self-determined death and actively switches off his own power supply. Alone, Eva sets off for the gates of heaven to ask for a pardon for her father and a soul for Bob-3.

Robots have already entered our daily lives, and in a few dozen of years they will live next to us and help in our everyday life. Their algorithmic brains and our confidence in their total obedience does not guarantee that a soulless machine will not become intelligent, will not begin to think independently, will not look like a person.

The book begins in 1402, when a scientist is forced to renounce his blasphemous thoughts. Only then does the reader become acquainted with the story line in our near future. The medieval parallel story comes up again and again briefly before turning everything upside down at the end of the novel.

GATE TO HEAVEN is a novel about consciousness, the soul and artificial intelligence.



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Max Maximov

Russian science fiction

Apocalypsis³

THE SHELTER

Scifi/ Post-apocalypse. Eksmo. Moscow 2019. 180 pages

A change in the Earth's atmosphere led to optimal living conditions for insects, which grew larger with each new population. Now, after 10,000 years, the giant insects have exterminated almost all other life forms. Only about 2,000 people still survive in a bunker that was once set up to operate a supercomputer. A group of computer scientists is trying to find a way to reclaim the planet for humans after all. But they are running out of time: energy is becoming scarce, and expeditions to the surface to obtain new food kill too many people every time. But then they make a discovery in one of the experiments that completely changes their own idea of the origin of the world. Panspermia, primeval soup, chemical evolution, higher forces, divine intervention, Darwinism – there are many theories, both scientific and those beyond the parameters of science. But what if one of the most incredible theories about the existence of the Earth and all living things were true, namely the so-called simulation hypothesis? The people in the bunker have nothing to lose, because the insects have now invaded via the ventilation system and are gaining ground. The most incredible idea, however, that everything is just computer code and that they really do not exist, could be the saving key to survival. While part of the crew is desperately trying to defend the control room against the insects, the last two programmers have to decide in a dispute whether to reset the entire system or not. Even if it saves all their lives, it will definitely no longer be the life they thought they were living. But what if the supercomputer they have never seen in the bunker, which is secured in the deepest floors below them, is not even real? Is that „God“ then? Should they trust it, or should they bite on the death capsule to avoid being painfully eaten up by the insects?

THE SHELTER is a novel about the origin and meaning of life, about the power of faith and the double moral of knowledge.

WHEN SNOW IS FALLING

Scifi/ Post-apocalypse. Eksmo. Moscow 2019. 180 pages

Dust and ashes darken the sun in the northern hemisphere after a terrible war. For the few survivors it is getting colder and colder. Kornei and the Old Guy are heading south, where it is supposed to be warmer. In contrast with the Old Guy, who is ruthless in his efforts only to save his own skin, Kornei seems a naive fool who still dreams of a better life for all. But their march, accompanied by danger, only seems to lead them into a much more final catastrophe.

Parallel to the Kornei and the Old Guy's escape, we witness scenes following a crucifixion, where an apparently alien being, who possesses supernatural powers, asks the crucified man about the future and redemption.

In the spirit of: The Master and Margarita by M. Bulgakov, The Road by Cormac McCarthy, The Minds of Billy Milligan by Daniel Keyes



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full English for 3 novels

Max Maximov

Russian science fiction horror

To Mars!

Scifi/ Horror. Eksmo. Moscow 2019. 317 pages

over 150,000 listenings of audioversion

available in full English

As a child, Ivan had to witness his parents' bodies being repeatedly possessed by monsters. With toy soldiers and stuffed animals, he created an army of helpers against fear. Later as an adult, Ivan dreams of not just becoming rich and successful, but of changing the world for the better. Because if mankind continues to go on as before, a global catastrophe is imminent. Ivan wants to build a new civilization on Mars in time. But suddenly Ivan starts to hear voices, then one voice, the voice of the author Max. But this author, who created Ivan, himself repeatedly has the reins taken out of his own hands. He needs Ivan's help to find out which evil force is playing its cruel game with both of them. In return, Ivan wants Max to help him carry out his idea of flying to Mars by having Max continue writing the book in that direction. Ivan sides with Max, even though the evil force has threatened to destroy all text files if Max with his writing tries to undo the consequences of the cruel parallel plot line. Also, in the life of author Max, places and periods of time suddenly shift. While Ivan, now a wealthy investor, is preparing with a team of scientists to launch the rocket to Mars, gravity suddenly disappears in the parallel world, the atmosphere is atomized, the sun is melting. Then years of normality return to Ivan's life. It's only when he goes to the opening of his spaceport that he is suddenly taken back to a parallel world and an endless forest populated by monsters. While Max suddenly disappears completely, the evil force finally reveals itself: Andrei, who had been separated from his parents and taken to an orphanage, while Max took his place living with his parents. And Ivan suddenly finds himself in a psychiatric hospital, his mother claiming during a visit that she had spent his entire childhood with him in clinics. His current cellmate, a „crazy“ lecturer, tells him about the simulacrum theory. This is Ivan's chance to prove that he is not crazy: if he can prove credibly that he is just a character from a book. He is released home for good behavior, but he finds nothing on the Internet about his Mars company. So, in the end he calls the reader for help as a final instance, who can and must decide who is who in this mirror cabinet of reality and delusion.

A psychologically and logically intricate plot, exciting like Borges or Kafka, but up to date with simulacra and cosmic dimensions, including theories about space and time.

In the spirit of: Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand



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full English for 3 novels

Max Maximov

Russian science fiction horror

The Good Man

Scifi/ Horror. Eksmo. Moscow 2020. 200 pages

over 100,000 listenings of audioversion

available in full English

A weed of obviously extraterrestrial origin covers the Earth with tentacles. People near the plants are going crazy. But the plant doesn't only penetrate the brains via messenger substances, it creates terrible monsters from the living organisms it has swallowed. Unexpectedly, it turns out that only people with Down syndrome (DS) are immune to the destructive nature of the weeds. The Space Infection Institute has launched a new call to recruit volunteers to spray a weed killer into the root. Several groups have already moved towards the center of the parasite and have been able to establish a path through it with supply points in abandoned villages. None of these DS groups have been able to reach the source. Because the weeds are constantly spreading, the path to the source takes longer every day. No one has yet returned alive, because the DS people are also exposed to the no less dangerous mutants and monsters without protection.

After the death of their parents, a boy with DS, Kostya, and his sister live with a guardian who exploits and abuses them. The good-natured Kostya has always wanted to save the world and also wants to make himself and his sister independent with a lavish salary. Kostya lets himself be persuaded by the guardian to take on this life-threatening job. The guardian prevents the sister from finding out about it in time and collects the payment himself. Kostya and two companions receive a crash course on how to transport the chemical to the root of the plant to destroy the weeds. They are remote controlled via camera and headset. Kostya's controller is Alex.

Parallel to this, investigations (as flash-forwards) are underway into strange serial murders. Beside the corpses lie their internal organs without any visible external injuries. The victims are bandits, murderers, drug dealers and others who bring suffering into the world.

When Kostya is the only survivor of his group to make it to the root after being attacked by the monsters, it becomes clear that the weed is not an alien parasite. It is a plant that grows from the fifth dimension into the fourth dimension and from there into our three-dimensional world and further into two-dimensionality. Through a portal at the root Kostya falls into the fourth dimension, which from now on enables him not only to see into the past of the third dimension, but also to appear there himself in different places at completely different times. When he sees how the drunken guardian is about to rape his underage sister, he appears in the apartment and kills him. And then he continues his own mission to eradicate evil. And everyone suddenly becomes afraid to commit evil at all, because a person with Down's syndrome has voluntarily stayed in the fourth dimension to keep order in the world.

A parable about the two faces of good and evil and the one-dimensionality of our worldview



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Max Maximov

Russian science fiction

Inversion of Life

Scifi/ Horror. Eksmo. Moscow 2022. 188 pages

Nobody knows how the universe works. How did it come about? How will end? There are many versions about birth and death of the universe. But what if things are much more complicated? Eleventh grader Alexander Petrov, sitting at his desk in the classroom, has no idea what will happen to him in the next fourteen billion years...

«Inversion of Life» is of impressive scope. Comparing a point on Earth to a distant laboratory in another galaxy, the author lets us feel the full abyss of despair of three teenagers locked behind school walls. It forces us to think about the full extent of the changes taking place on the planet. And what we, ordinary people, actually mean for infinite space...



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2021 Young Adult Content Award

sample translation available

full English for 3 novels

Max Maximov

Russian fantasy, LitRPG / cyberpunk

Play to Live

Fantasy, LitRPG/ Cyberpunk. Eksmo. Moscow 2014.
7 volumes (approx. 420 pages each)

Publishers: Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Poland, US

Vol. 1 Alter World

A new pandemic – the perma effect – has taken over Earth of the near future. Whenever you play your favorite online game, beware: your mind might merge with the virtual world and dump its comatose host. Woe be to those stuck forever in Tetris! And still they're the lucky ones compared to those burning alive eternally within the scorched hulls of tank simulators. But some unfortunates – the handicapped and the terminally ill, shell-shocked army vets, wronged crime victims and other society misfits – choose to flee real life willingly, escaping to the limitless world of online sword and sorcery MMORPGs. Once a seasoned gamer and now a terminal cancer patient, Max grasps at this final chance to preserve his life and identity. So he goes for it – goes for the promise of immortality shared with a few trusty friends and the woman he loves. Together they roam the roads of AlterWorld and sample its agony and ecstasy born of absolute freedom.

Vol. 2 The Clan

Once a seasoned gamer, Max has cheated fate swapping his dying body for an immortal avatar in the world of sword and sorcery MMORPGs. He joins the ranks of a new race of people: perma players, forever stuck in the virtual castles and cities of AlterWorld. Now they have to obey the ever-changing rules of their new home while learning to live together in peace, love and justice. But freedom and immortality are a poisoned chalice. Some of Max's new friends crave power, others become traitors and spies. Soon the first screams of pain fill the virtual world as its freshly-minted slavedrivers and torturers indulge in the absence of law and order. Their crimes provide a constant flow of gold back to their real-world controllers: the power-happy governments plotting to take over AlterWorld's magic technologies and limitless resources. What would you do? Would you step aside and watch the magical world turn into the Earth's dark twin? Or are you strong enough to step in the virtual sharks' way?

Vol. 3 The Duty

The perma players' new reality gains depth and color. The virtual world has seen its first birth — and its first death. The invisible umbilical cord connecting AlterWorld to Earth grows thinner, and even the Fallen One cannot prevent the looming catastrophe. Could Max have ignored the Russian girl who'd just escaped slavery in a virtual China? Could he have turned a deaf ear to her pleas as the desperate fugitive clutched at straws on hearing her native tongue? All this triggers a full-blown confrontation, sending armies of thousands into battle in the heart of the Frontier, burning kilotons of mana, melting desert sands and hacking through impervious mithril armor. The two nations' furious war cries obscure the sky as the Gods shudder at humans' desperate cruelty.



THE AUTHOR

translations
5 languages

samples available
full English

other series
Squadcom-13

D. Rus was born in Kiev. He has been a fanatic reader since childhood. He read all available books in his school and city library. But D. Rus is not a book worm. He served in the army of two different countries and is a good sniper. He also travelled a lot and lived in Asia and the Far East. After studying Mathematics and Computer Sciences he has been working in this field ever since.

Dmitri Rus

Vol. 4 The Inferno

The fabric of reality is bursting at the seams. The gnolls' negotiators are knocking at the gates of the Kremlin. Ancient half-forgotten gods take on a new lease on life as AlterWorld's avatars. A spark of the Creator's almighty will is still alive in the hearts of millions of players, obeying the impulses of their faith and knowledge while reshaping the Universe to suit their unspoken needs. Initially AlterWorld came complete with infernal planes. So how about confronting a few demons? Not the cartoon characters dreamed up by some game designer: These are the true spawn of evil, archdemons and princes of hell, the vengeful retributors that our faith has delivered unto this newborn world. Max has a lot on his plate. As a clan and alliance leader, he has to repay his debt to the gods and prepare for the upcoming battle for the First Temple. And still, how could he say no to a potential ally? Could he leave desperate fellow players without help? And how could he ignore the vast unclaimed territories just begging to be taken? Soon the volcanic wastelands of Inferno will shudder from the march of the steel legions. Its lands will awaken to the tramping of the countless mounts, players' pets, and familiars - and groan under the thunderous gait of the many assault golems.

Vol. 5 The Battle

The Russian cluster. The ground shakes as the enemy approaches. The angered gods frown as they look down from the sky. Intelligence agencies are locked in a brutal fight. Hundreds of thousands of sentient beings happily slaughter each other. This is no longer a game quest nor a petty fight between clans over some land rich in resources. This is war! A war of civilizations, religions, and all the dimensions of the world. The Earth weeps in pain. The astral beings turn away in horror. Burning castle towers collapse to the ground. Stones melt in the heat. The enemy is coming. Refugees flood the Valley. Alliance members are joining forces. Max is not just a clan leader anymore. He is the Chief, the head of the resistance. And you have no choice but to fight; you are the hope of the children and the thousands of innocents. They have entrusted you with their lives.

Vol. 6 The War

The magic flames are raging. Blades are melting. Souls are reduced to ashes in the fury of battle. The grand finale of the war for the First Temple is upon us. The last trump cards have been played, the reserves are all exhausted, and even the gods have engaged in the plebeian fight. The universe is on the point of collapse. Broken are the chains that hold the worlds together. The icy waters of the Baltic cool the scorching sands of the Frontier. The creatures of AlterWorld spill the first blood on the quiet streets of Earth's cities. What will Max do? Become embittered and butcher his enemies? Seize the deserted castles and abandoned lands? Attempt to save the one who had given her life defending him? Or try to win the jackpot by finding a way home, back to Earth?

Vol. 7 The Ultimatum

Humanity began to play with virtuality, and virtuality began to play with people. The real and virtual worlds have merged. ... The land pays dear bills and is generously washed in blood - Africa is empty, Australia is depopulated. The boundaries of inhabited enclaves are rapidly shrinking. The world trembles under the tread of demons invading our planet from three realities - „Drumira“, „Diablo“ and „Heroes of Might and Magic“. Monsters from various computer games appeared on Earth. Gleb cannot stay away from the current events. He decides to protect humanity. Even if his own life is the cost ... What should Gleb Nazarov do? Take refuge in his gaming cluster, strengthening his own power and filling his treasury? Or abandon everything and rush to the aid of earthlings retreating before the hordes of demons? The ancient mobilization warehouses have already been printed out, choking, they scribble the grandfather's PPSH, and someone presses the butt of the scratched PTR into the shoulder and yells hoarsely: „Patron!“ ... So now the main character is fighting enemies from virtual realities. Fortunately, while all the benefits of Drumir are available to him. This means that he can settle accounts with old enemies, give hope to people and even try to become the chosen one.

Vol. 8 The Path of the Young God

In previous books, the terminally ill Gleb digitized his consciousness and plunged into the virtual „Drumir“ forever. There he rallied several clans around himself and became the founder of his own. „Drumir“ has long ceased to be just a game, and those who are used to dictating their will to the world, the emergence of a new force caused discontent. Enemies, who had a multiple advantage, surrounded Gleb and his allies from all sides, but thanks to luck and skillful strategy, the hero always had aces in his sleeve. In the decisive battle, he manages to win, but the connection between the worlds is broken. Creatures from „Drumir“ break into the real world, and vice versa, and Gleb himself, after the final battle with the demon Asmodeus, becomes one of the gods. In the eighth book, the hero has to start almost all over again, but on a different level. He is surrounded by thousands of gods living in the multi-tiered structure of the Tree of Worlds. And Gleb needs to grow, gaining „points of faith.“ However, he spends them to help loved ones and allies. The result is a fall down to the very base of the Tree. Now the hero's path upward will be long and difficult. But his character is still strong.

Dmitri Rus

Russian fantasy, LitRPG / cyberpunk

Squadcom-13

Space Opera, LitRPG/ Cyberpunk. Eksmo. Moscow 2015-17.
3 volumes (approx. 420 pages each)

Publishers: Czech Republic, Poland, US

Vol. 1 The Cadet
Eksmo 2015, 352 pages

The near future. A UFO appears on Earth's orbit. Ignoring all contact attempts, it showers the planet with priceless artifacts. Choose: perfect health, ten million dollars, or seven years in prison as per the new amendment.

The night of the Meteor Shower, Paul and his friends run around the city, engaging in quick fights with citizens gone crazy, trying to obtain one of the artifacts.

But is it really selfless help the mysterious aliens are offering? What awaits a human who holds a precious crystal in his hand? Where will he wake up tomorrow? What if the first thing he sees when he opens his eyes will be the blinking line of text: "Loading location: virtual training ground Kubinka-Digital. Welcome, cadet! You're now space fighter pilot!"

Vol. 2 The Lieutenant
Eksmo 2017, 352 pages

Vol. 3 The Captain
Eksmo 2017, 350 pages



THE AUTHOR

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full English

other series
Play to Live

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Dmitri Rus

Ukrainian postapocalyptic

Best Age to Die

Postapocalyptic dystopia. 3 volumes
Folio. Kharkov 2017. approx. 500 pages each

1 Best Age to Die/ 2 No Time to Die/ 3 Best Age to Live

OPTION FOR MOVIE AND COMPUTER GAME SOLD

Publishers: Germany - Piper

A virus has escaped from a military laboratory and has quickly swept through the globalized world before the antiviral drug was available. The virus was developed for use in war to incapacitate all enemy soldiers. Within a few weeks everyone over the age of 18 begins to age rapidly and dies. All adults in the world are wiped out. The inexperienced children and adolescents fight a pointless and bloody battle for brief survival. They quickly learn how to kill, but learning how to love does not seem to be worth the effort any more. In the doomed world, every gang tries to organize its own survival in its own zone by using various strategies: shamanism, cannibalism, recruitment of males and females capable of reproduction, selection, strictly controlled programs for breeding, inbreeding and so on.

Tim, a wimpish bookworm, and his female companion Belka, an aggressively merciless lone-warrior, are an unlikely team. But they are driven by a final mutual hope, because Tim, who is very widely-read, has gathered information about the virus, which is viewed by the ignorant as a MERCILESS god. For their seemingly hopeless odyssey to the source of the evil they need not only each other, but it is also necessary to convince the other gangs. However, in spite of this last chance of saving humanity and the planet in a combined effort, the battling groups are more inclined to join forces to oppose Belka and Tim. Finally, however, Belka and Tim find containers with the antiviral drug in bunkers under the military laboratory. For Belka the discovery comes too late, but Tim sets off back with several boxes of the vaccine to rescue those who are destined to die over the winter. Only a bird circling overhead observes that a pursuer is hard on Tim's heels...

The unusually cinematic and graphic descriptions of locations and events, but also of atrocities and violence keep the level of suspense high. The novel has no monsters or other fantasy-elements and, despite the abundance of detail, focusses on human nature in all its facets. None of the protagonists is only good or only bad. They are first and foremost human beings, reduced to living by their instincts and with the personalities and physical capabilities they had at the time of the catastrophe. The character development is concentrated by the magnifying glass of the desperate circumstances, causing the youthful age of the protagonists to be quickly forgotten after only a short time of reading. The place names have been Americanized, the descriptive names of the characters are in Russian, the story line could take place in the conurbation of either a western or an eastern metropolis.

Valetov was born in 1963 in the Ukrainian city of Dnepropetrovsk (now Dnipro). He finished Technical University as a missile construction engineer, but became a private businessman later. He began to write after the turn of the millennium. Since then he has had seven books published, some as multi-volume series, of which several have achieved bestseller status and been awarded prizes. One of his books has been adapted for Russian television. Valetov lives in the Ukrainian city of Dnipro.



THE AUTHOR

translations
3 languages

awards
2009 INTERPRESSKON
2009 BRONZE CADUCEUS

sample translation available
english
full german

other works
The Damned
Stay Alive

Jan Valetov

Ukrainian postapocalyptic

No-Man's Land

Postapocalyptic dystopia. Folio. Kharkov 2007-2009. 582 pages

Tetralogy

Awards: 2009 Interpresskon, Bronze Caduceus (Starbridge)

Publishers: Poland - Fabrika Slov

No-Man's land, former Ukraine. The collapse of the Dnieper dam cascade 12 years ago killed millions. The ecosystem collapsed. Chemical, biological and radioactive contamination have turned the areas into No-Man's land. The Black Sea and coastal areas are practically lifeless. Central and southern Ukraine have been transformed into a common zone of influence for the G7 countries. Gas and oil pipelines are placed under the protection of Russian troops. Ukraine is divided into the Eastern Republic, which is under the protectorate of the Russian Empire (ruled by Emperor Alexander Alexandrovich Krutov, who was appointed to power by the people) and the Confederation, which is under the protectorate of Poland and the EU.

No-Man's land is separated from the rest of the world by barbed wire fences, mine-fields and control paths. The neighboring countries dump criminals and dissidents there like in a swamp. Getting into the Zone of Common Influence means death, and sometimes worse than death. But people still live here. People for whom No-Man's land has become a home.

In further storylines, a picture of modern political life in Ukraine unfolds. There are interests of the political elites of Ukraine, the Russian FSB, Cuban mercenaries and African terrorists. Another line is hero's affair with the press secretary of the President of Ukraine.

No-Man's Land is a mixture of post-apocalyptic action, political crime, spy novel and prophecy.



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Best Age to Die

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contact

Thomas Wiedling
t | +49-89-62242844
m | +49-174-2759072
thomas@wiedling-litag.com

Wiedling Literary Agency
Pappenheimstrasse 3
80335 Munich, Germany

fantasy, LitRPG / cyberpunk

World of Arkon

Fantasy, LitRPG/ Cyberpunk. Eksmo. Moscow 2014.

9 volumes

Rights available: Czech, German, Hungarian, Polish, Slovak

Publishers: amazon US

Vol. 1 – Patch 17

350 pages

A new update arrives to the ultra-popular online game, Realm of Arkon. With Patch 17, the level of immersion experienced by players in their gaming capsules has made virtual reality indistinguishable from the real world. But every gamer's dream becomes a nightmare for Roman Kozhevnikov after he gets confined to Arkon against his will. And not just to Arkon, but to its deadliest zone—Demon Grounds. Playing, or rather living as his character Krian, it's not just about survival for Roman. He longs to exact revenge for his banishment to the virtual world where the sensation of pain has reached one hundred percent...

Vol. 2: Damned principality

450 pages

An immortal wanderer in an enormous alien world, Krian struggles to survive in a closed plane populated by powerful mobs and hostile NPCs. With bungled stats, inadequate gear and no friends by his side, he is driven by only his willpower... and by his hatred toward the people responsible for his misery. Revenge is his purpose now, his entire reason for being. But his path lies through the cursed principality of Craedia stretching far to the south....

Vol. 3: Steel Wolves of Craedia

370 pages

The flames of war spread through the Cursed Principality to devastating effect. Bound by powerful centuries-old magic, the Great Essences yearn to regain their freedom. In the face of an impossible mission, Krian has no choice but to keep going, while risking everything that's become dear to him. The only solution is to become stronger and forget the meaning of the word "impossible." And so a plangent wolf's howl soars over the battlefield as a plate-clad cavalry rushes the enemy ranks...



THE AUTHOR

samples available

full English

G. Akella is the in-game user name of Georgi Smorodinski. Akella has been an avid gamer for two decades now. He is passionate about MMORPG ever since he started playing Ultima Online and WoW. His main classes are Warrior, Rogue, and Death Knight. Currently, he is playing Black Desert. Realm of Arkon is his debut series inspired by the works of D. Rus, V. Mahanenko and others. In the author's own words: „I wanted to create a world that lived by the game's rules and write a book that even gamers would enjoy reading.“ His golden rule is to balance outstanding game mechanics, immersive writing and logical character growth. G. Akella is currently living in Moscow with his wife and three daughters. His dream is to visit San Francisco one day, the city in which Patch 17 takes place.

G. Akella

Russian diaspora fantasy young adult 13+

Adventures of Molly Blackwater

young adult 13+ fantasy. Eksmo. Moscow 2016.
3 volumes

Publishers: Dobrovsky - Czech Republic, Albatros - Poland

Vol. 1 Beyond the Edge of the World - 448 pages

Coal furnaces are flaming in the Empire, steam is moving pistons and all the mashines, monitors are plowing high seas and huge armored trains are thundering down the tracks. Empire needs a lot of raw materials, and it is pushing away from their lands northern barbarians-Rooskies, whose domain became linked to the Empire by a terrible Cataclysm. Steam is a blessing for the Empire and Magic is a curse. Magic is unpredictable and extremely dangerous, it will burn a human being from inside and the final explosion will kill everyone nearby. This is why a Special Department was created in the Empire, detaining dangerous "malefic" magical people before they can do too much harm. And what can you do, if you are only twelve, and magic is suddenly strong in you and there is no way to escape this malady? Well, there is just one, who knows, but he is only a barbarian boy, taken prisoner by the Empire. So what can do now Miss Mollyner Evergreen Blackwater, young girl from a family of a well-respected medical doctor?

Vol. 2 Steel, Steam and Magic - 480 pages

Molly Blackwater comes home from "beyond the edge of the world", armed with knowledge and spells of magic, which makes her "the enemy of the state". She is arrested and taken to the depths of the Special Department. Will she be able to outsmart the Department and its leader, mysterious Lord Spencer, who also are in possession of some special powers? This is the only way to save her friends, her family and herself. Molly's battlefield now is her hometown of Nord York, with its riches and poverty and secret underground caverns. Not only thugs from the Special Department are against her now, but those who can destroy the magic itself!

Vol. 3 Blood Island

Molly Blackwater is taken to the Blood Island where she must pass a mysterious 'initiation' into ranks of the Empire's nobility. Yarina the Shapeshifter is accompanying her in secret. On the island Molly discovers that the energy of a dying "malefics" is utilized and absorbed by "anti-magic" Earls, Viscounts, Marquises and Dukes, working as a healing and life-prolonging feature. To be 'initiated' Molly has to kill her own friend. She finds out that all the nobles are some sort of vampires, preying on 'magical' people. This gives the nobility huge advantages, they are the mainstay of the Empire's successes. Molly has to fight her way out of that Island and solve the last riddle, the real reason for the bloody war between the barbarians and the Empire. She must find the cause and destroy it



THE AUTHOR

translations
8 languages

samples available
full English

other high fantasy series
Ring of Darkness
Hjorward Chronicles
Seven Beasts of Raleigh
Chronicles of the Breaking

Nik Perumov was born 1963 in Leningrad, today St. Petersburg. He began writing short stories when he was a teenager. After studying at the Leningrad Polytechnical Institute, Perumov worked at a research institute. A fantasy fan he translated Tolkien's Lord of the Rings in the early 1980s which was the start to a Tolkien-mania in Russia. In the early 1990ies he published his own first fantasy series Ring of Darkness which provoked a controversy in the Tolkien fandom. But since this successful debut all of Perumov's books together have sold more than 12 Mio copies. During Russian financial crisis in 1998 Perumov emigrated to the United States of America where he works as biophysician at a university medical centre. His job does not keep him from continuously writing new sci-fi and fantasy series.

Nik Perumov

Russian diaspora high fantasy

Chronicles of the Breaking

high fantasy. Eksmo. Moscow 1998-2001
8 volumes, over 6.2 Mio copies sold

Publishers: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Sweden

Vol. 1 The Swords - 480 pages

It has been several centuries already, since the Empire, built by humans, who conquered gnomes, elves, orcs, and Danus, is held with blood and fear. The support of the Throne comes from seven Magic Orders – they have unlimited authority over souls and fates of the inhabiting the country citizens and the emperor himself. But the day of the vengeance is close at hand, and so is the day of the great battle, because in the depth of Drungs Woods a holy sword Immel'storn has been awoken and his Diamond „brother” Dragnir, has been shining brightly in the secret caves of Subterranean Tribe.

Vol. 2 Birth of the Mage - 512 pages

Fess, the native of Valley of Mages and advisor to Emperor of Mel'insk Empire, after the fatal battle of Diamond and Wooden Swords is thrown out into Eviall, one of the worlds of Regulated. Fess has to start everything from the beginning: his memory is distorted, and magic abilities weakened by unknown forces. Time does not wait: prophecies promise fast and terrible end to the his new family. But neither Fess, nor anyone else in the Eviall realizes, that, without their own knowledge, those who are supposed to save worlds had a hand in it – battle mage Klara Khummel' and her disciples, lost in the web of paths inside Betweenreality.

Vol. 3 Wanderings of the Mage - part 1/2 each 384 pages

The difficult road, covered in blood of his enemies and friends, by the tears of desperation and grievance, leads the Keeper of Diamond and Wooden Swords, mage and necromancer Fess into Narn, the homeland of Dark elves. But the inhabitants of the magic forest refuse to give him the refuge, seeing future of the black wizard as the apostle of dark, who is likely to bring death to the entire Eviall. There is only one way to check the truthfulness of this terrible prophecy, and Fess accepts it, moving forward, with the pursuers of Holy Inquisition behind, and with the hope for miracle in the soul.

Ring of Darkness

high fantasy. Eksmo. Moscow 1993-1995
3 volumes, over 2 Mio copies sold

Publishers: Bulgaria, Czech, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovak, Sweden, Turkey

Vol. 1 The Elf Sword

Vol. 2 Black Spear

Vol. 3 Henna's Adamant

Nik Perumov

horror

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contact

Thomas Wiedling
t | +49-89-62242844
m | +49-174-2759072
thomas@wiedling-litag.com

Wiedling Literary Agency
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80335 Munich, Germany

Russian horror

Vyurki- The Village at the Edge of Noon

Horror novel. Astrel. St. Petersburg 2018. 416 pages

Bad things happen in the Vyurki dacha settlement: cats suddenly jump through the air and scratch their owners until they bleed, nettles overgrow whole gardens and houses in one night. People are disappearing: some went to the forest just to pick mushrooms, some went to the river to swim – nobody comes back. And whoever returns resembles a zombie with animal appetites and blind eyes. Leaving the village is impossible: everyone who tried has disappeared. Telephone, radio, television and clocks no longer work. Time has stood still as eternal summer that, like a black hole, no longer lets anyone in or out.

Of all the local residents, only the strange girl Katya, a silent lonely fisherwoman, seems to roughly understand what is happening in Vyurki and what sins residents are paying for. Romochka, who is considered the village idiot, is the only one besides Katja who apparently also sees the ghosts, but cannot resist their call and voluntarily goes into the water.

At first it seems as if only local river and forest spirits are up to mischief in the dacha village, which could perhaps be appeased with the help of local magic spells and incantations. River elves, goblins, earth monsters made of branches and roots, burning brooms, wandering trees, giant leeches, a walking flame. But little by little the residents of the dacha themselves show strange tendencies. Is it that unbearable howling sound that turns everyone's dark side of character inside out? Suddenly, dear neighbors seem stranger than the guest-worker caretaker who was never really accepted in the settlement: the businessman's family, who have cut themselves off from the entire cooperative in his manor house, now aggressively barricade themselves in; a pensioner hoarding food now burrows like a mole into the storage cellars of the other dachas; the Soviet plaster statues of a collector-loving pensioner suddenly come to life; and the schoolgirl Yuki not only seems to have inherited her Gothic amulet from her grandmother. Or does the reader already only encounter their undead revenants, who chop off fingers, bite off hands and in the end eat entire people?

It turns out to be a good example of an action-horror thriller with an obligatory love spell... then we finally get to know where all these creatures are from, but that doesn't make it any easier - by this point the residents of the village are already so crazy, that they are willing to kill each other. Vyurki reads both as a parable about the current state of mind and morals in a world gone mad by all sorts of civilizational and ecological pressures, as well as a parable about the basic evil woven into every single human being.



THE AUTHOR

other works

The Courtyard on the
Brink of Midnight

awards

Master of Horror 2021
New Horizons 2019
Master of Horror 2019
Big Book longlist 2018
Yasnaya Polyana longlist 2018

sample translation

English

Darya Bobyleva was born in Moscow in 1982. After graduating from the Gorky Literary Institute, she worked as a translator for cinema and television, as well as a voice actress for cinema and computer games. Today she works in an antiquarian bookshop. Bobyleva lives in Moscow.

Darya Bobyleva

Russian horror

„Darya Bobyleva has the talent of a sorceress in literature - she enters the dark memory of the most ordinary apartments, she senses troubles in familiar relationships, she knows the terrible secrets of average big-city families. The novel „Vyurki“ is the culmination of her mystical forays into the wrong side of everyday life.“

VALERIA PUSTOVAYA

„Haze and horror completely unpredictable: the most important virtue of a modern author (tricking the reader by the nose so that no one knows what will happen on the next few pages), she masters brilliantly.“

DMITRI BAVILSKI

„And after ten and after fifty years „Vyurki“ will look as fresh and at the same time monumental as now.“

DARKER MAGAZINE

„The horror here does not lie in the appearance of creepy creatures, nor in the fact that an extreme situation brings out in man all his worst tendencies. The horror is that our zone of control and our scope of action is negligible compared to the territory we do not control.“

DRUZHBA NARODOV

„Daria Bobyleva immediately evokes a feeling of sweet and sleepy childish terror, which at the same time is overshadowed by an increased concrete belief in one's own safety and inaccessibility to the forces of evil.“

MEDUZA (GALINA YUZEFOVICH)

„Slavic mythology is indeed an uncultivated field (and just so vast that it can be tilled for a very long time) on which to create Russian horror, and that's what (this book) does in a great, fitting and flashy way.“

YANA LETT

Darya Bobyleva

Russian horror

Nash Dvor - The Courtyard on the Brink of Midnight

Horror novel. Astrel. St. Petersburg 2021. 352 pages

Publishers: Poland - Nowa Fantastika (excerpt)

An anonymous city courtyard somewhere in Moscow's old town center - a space that is both open and separated from the outside world by a clear natural boundary. A bakery in the courtyard above, a river below, the garages in the middle and next to them a bird cemetery where the children bury pigeons, rats, hamsters and, with a bit of luck, even a cat. On one side of the courtyard is an elegant, cream-colored Stalin building (famous for its deep and horribly flooded cellars), on the other side a pompous block with a rich mosaic (everything would be fine, if the stout collective farmers and muscular miners pictured in this mosaic did not sometimes come to life at night, and woe to those upon whom they cast their dead eyes). But there are also plainly boring nine-story brick buildings and an unhygienic two-story brick shack inhabited by a poltergeist. Behind the houses is a duckweed-covered pond full of tadpoles, behind it a boarding school for mentally handicapped children (in whose catacombs the abbot of the neighboring monastery, who went underground in the civil war and rotted there, still celebrates black masses). The theater's infamous „fourth wall“ that separates the spectator from actor does not exactly collapse in the novel, but rather creeps and ripples, becoming dangerous and disturbingly porous - just like the mirror from which a sinister mummer stares at the novel's heroes. Such neighborhoods are often dangerous, but for a while the sides are in a delicate balance, thanks to an all-female family of fortune tellers living in the corner house. With the help of unusual tarot cards, they understand and explain what is happening in the yard. The fortune tellers are unpopular and considered either witches or charlatans, but as soon as something inexplicable is suspected, everyone rushes to them for help.

“A real “Russian horror book”: joyless, full of despair and tenderness ... The novel is a whole, but it consists of many parts, and each part, each individual element, can be viewed for a long time and reread several times. Images from different times that twist and enchant in a kaleidoscope of events... There are no limits to despair and death... Impossible to tear yourself away from the book.” DARK

“OUR YARD is about not turning a blind eye to some things or it will only make things worse for everyone - both those who turn a blind eye and those who happen to stand by.” FANTLAB.RU

“The stories of Darya Bobyleva immediately bring back memories of that sweet, sleepy childish horror when a first shadow fell on the then rock-solid belief in one's own protection, in being shielded from the power of evil.” MEDUZA (Galina Yuzefovich)

Darya Bobyleva was born in Moscow in 1982. After graduating from the Gorky Literary Institute, she worked as a translator for cinema and television, as well as a voice actress for cinema and computer games. Today she works in an antiquarian bookshop. Bobyleva lives in Moscow.



THE AUTHOR

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sample translation

English

Darya Bobyleva

Summary

A city courtyard in the center of Moscow is constantly plagued by the supernatural. Local residents live side by side with otherworldly „neighbors“ - characters from Soviet and post-Soviet urban legends as well as creatures far older and stranger than that. This neighborhood is often dangerous, but there is a delicate balance thanks to an all-female family of fortune tellers living in the corner house. They have similar ancient names – Avigeya, Dosithea, Pelageya – and with the help of unusual Tarot cards they can interpret what is happening in the courtyard and beneath it. They are not exactly popular, more feared than liked, and yet they are the guardians of the human world from the “other” one.

At the beginning of the novel, the elderly fortune-teller Avigeya does not have time to save the philosopher Lev Veniaminovich, who has fallen under the spell of his housekeeper Agafya. Agafya prepares unusually delicious Russian folk dishes, sprinkled with black „salt of the earth“. In the end it turns out that this salt is made from burned human bones and the philosopher was fattened to be slaughtered.

The downtrodden boy Lesha, locked in the basement of a „Stalinistic“ house by court thugs, accidentally touches a mysterious subterranean creature and begins to transform into its likeness.

The pioneer Lyusya from the finds a page from an old, pre-revolutionary newspaper in the yard, and responds to the advertisement of a certain Umr - “DeAth” -, which she thinks is an interesting riddle to solve. The mysterious being sends parts of itself through the mail until it can finally put itself back together in the form of Lyusya’s father, who has abandoned the family. Umr tries to kidnap Lyusya’s sister, but fortune teller Avigeya dares to fight him – and wins, though she is left with a „bone-crushing disease.”

The director of a boarding school for special needs children conducts experiments to cure the children of mental retardation and make them ideal communist citizens, slowly going mad all the while. The children get smarter at first, but then quickly exceed the limits of the human mind and torture themselves with the fact that they „see through” everything. A boarding school worker who has glimpses of visionary gifts tries to resist the director, but she dies and the children themselves make short work of the director and then disappear from the boarding school.

Rosa, an adopted orphan girl with paranormal abilities, also ends up in this boarding school. Rosa and her half-sister Ada share a deep friendship, and for Ada’s sake, Rosa tries to control her gift of harming people, but she doesn’t always succeed. Rosa protects Ada from her former lover, releases her own gift, and the mosaic on the house’s facade comes to life. The true end of the world begins in the courtyard. The yard is saved by the family of fortune tellers together with old believer sorcerers who came from nowhere. Rosa and Ada, afraid of being separated, decide to flee south together and literally vanish into thin air. The elderly fortune teller Abigail dies from the illness caused by Umr and her place is taken by her daughter Dosithea, who is lazier and more insecure. Everyone compares her to her deceased mother, even she herself thinks that she will not make it. And the affairs of the fortune-tellers’ family are going really badly: the youngest of them, Pelageya, accidentally releases a demon from the mirror during Christmas fortune-telling. The demon takes the form of deceased loved ones and draws people into a mirror, into the realm of the dead. Pelageya can defeat the demon, but to do so she must go through the looking glass, and remain there as a kind of Bloody Mary.

Then the yard appears a TV show because of the story about the poltergeist in the communal barracks. When filming the story, the TV crew devote a lot of time to the ugly living conditions in the tenement, which the tenants perceive as a disgrace. Thanks to the fortune tellers, the TV crew find the source of the poltergeist: the remains of sewage in the basement from a secret toilet that one of the residents of a communal apartment had built in his room. But the yard is soon back in the news for a different reason: children fall into a lethargic sleep when picking up toys that have appeared out of nowhere on the street. Dosithea saves them and doesn’t have to face the usual evil spirits, but aliens she doesn’t even believe in. All of this changes Dosithea’s understanding of the interplay of worlds and her place in them, and she ends up in conflict with those „new Russians” who decide to build a bank on the site of a monastery ruin. Dosithea not only protects the courtyard and life in it from businessmen-bandits, but also from evil spirits. The abbot, who lives underground and whose apartment is being destroyed by the construction workers, comes to her at night with complaints. The „New Russians” have Dosithea murdered. The remaining fortune tellers leave, but the missing sisters Rosa and Ada now return to the courtyard. Rosa leads a „crusade” by alien beings against the newly opened bank. Participating in it are Lesha, who has turned into a cellar creature, the mirror-witch Pelageya, and children from the boarding school.

And finally, in the finale, it turns out that the story was told all along on behalf of the otherworldly beings. It was them who told the events in the courtyard from their point of view, they represent the Moscow of centuries of accreted history that are being forgotten and obliterated. After the bank is defeated, everything calms down and the fragile balance between this world and that reigns once again in the courtyard. And in the apartment where fortune-tellers once lived, a girl named Virineya rents a room - from her name it is clear that she is their descendant, and also of “special blood”.

Darya Bobyleva

Russian mystical horror thriller

The Hound-Headed

Mystical horror thriller. Mystical thriller. AST. Moscow 2011. 413 pages

Publishers: Italy - Voland

One remembers the extremely hot summer when the peat fields around Moscow were on fire. Even above a remote village near a former prison camp in the forest somewhere towards the Volga lies biting opaque smoke. Three Muscovites have been hired by an ominous preservation fund via the Internet to save a rare fresco depicting St. Christopher with a hound's head for the museum in the abandoned village church. Legend has it that Christophorus wanted to turn his brother into a man with a hound's head as a deterrent because he as a monk succumbed to the seduction of a girl. Instead, Christophorus himself was transformed into a hound-headed man, and in revenge he slashed his own brother and girl to pieces.

The village and its inhabitants, who are not only outwardly totally run-down, react aggressively to the strangers with their Mercedes bus, their notebooks and mobile phones including social networks. Liza is the only one who is friendly with the newcomers. But because of her speech impediment, her clues sound like warnings. While his two buddies are supposed to take care of the fresco's removal, Kirill makes closer contact with Liza. His mission is to investigate to what extent the customs and habits of the villagers still follow the legend of the hound-headed. Do old believers continue to do their mischief? Or do ex-GULAG convicts living in the forest avenge every attempt to leave the „zone“? Was it a hound-headed who raped Lisa just before she wanted to leave the village to study in Moscow?

For far too long, the three Muscovites have been thinking of everything as haunting images in the minds of the villagers, who are still socialized by the surveillance state Russia. But their enlightened intellectual view of the world breaks apart piece by piece in contact with this village community, which has degenerated from primitive primal fears to inhumanity. Did Kirill provoke everything because he got involved with Liza? The crossing of borderlines, no matter in which direction, the escape from one's own „zone“ becomes a danger to life for everyone. Even just a change of perspective can lead to ruin, and that's exactly how the author lures the reader in and has him on the hook like a fish.

Ivanov is at home in different genres. But he is always interested in those times, places and events in Russian culture where a transition from one cultural system to another takes place. Be it in Russian history, where new times replace the old ones, thematized in his historical and contemporary novels. Be it the collision of parallel systems, as in his mystical thrillers. His books are all explicitly plot driven, which is why almost all of them have become movies. Because they are easy to read and follow the rules of the genre, they are always aimed at a broad audience. But even on the surface one senses, without having to consciously perceive it, the authentic saturation and great closeness to life of his novels. Because only one layer deeper Ivanov's books are full of documentary facts, socio-historical descriptions and witty references. This way, even more intellectual reader will get their money's worth and on top of that a good deal of horror, suspense or historical-exotic entertainment.



THE AUTHOR

languages

8 languages

awards

2006 Yasnaya Polyana Award

2006 Big Book Award

2006 Strannik Prize

2004 Book of the Year

2004 Bazhov Award

2003 Mamin-Sibiryak Award

sample translation available

english

Aleksei Ivanov

Russian mystical horror thriller

"A rich, atmospheric American thriller, moved to our native aspen forest, which uses all our Russian phobias... of course the reader is hoodwinked, but extremely clever."
ST. PETERBURG VEDOMOSTI

"A clever, never boring, atmospheric novel, written in good literary language... exciting not as a „mystical thriller“, but as a novel about the violent conflict between parallel social worlds."
AFISHA

"The foundation of the novel is not the series of supernatural events, but the conflict between two worlds within one state. The author succeeds in illustrating in a very unusual way how Moscow differs from the rest of Russia."
Journal FOR ALL MEN

"An exciting, well-thought-out and intelligently constructed book that challenges the reader to solve puzzles that are extremely interesting, and provides imaginative worlds worth thinking about."
KOMMERSANT

Aleksei Ivanov was born in 1969 in Gorky (today Nizhny Novgorod). He grew up in Perm in the Urals. In 1996 he graduated from the University of Ekaterinburg with a degree in art history. He then worked as a caretaker, laboratory assistant, tourist guide, teacher, journalist and lecturer. His first publication in a magazine in 1990 was a fantasy novel. His first book publication was the mystical-historical novel „Heart of Parma“ 2003. 11 novels and 7 non-fiction books by him are now available with a total circulation of over 1.5 million. 5 books have been filmed, 5 more are currently being filmed. Aleksei Ivanov lives in Perm.

Aleksei Ivanov

Russian mystical horror thriller

The Food Shack

Novel. AST. Moscow 2003. 413 pages

Publishers: Estonia - Hea Lugu, Italy - Voland, World English - Glagoslav

Summer holiday camp on the Volga during the Moscow Olympics. A barge adorned with banners ships food to the camp's food shack and at the same time drops off Igor and other students who earn a little extra with a summer job as a group leader in the pioneer camp. But more tempting are the prospects of erotic adventures with other group leader students.

The children in the camp are all only about twelve years old. They sweeten their camp life with horror stories: there is a prison camp nearby, fleeing prisoners might live in the woods as animal man-eaters; a pensioner lives in an old dacha on the grounds, where there is supposedly a black room in which all those who lived here on the camp grounds before the revolution in an upper-class dacha settlement have disappeared and now haunt as ghosts.

Valerka is the outsider who simply wants to belong, but is bullied. He is the first to see a classmate sucking another's blood at night. He thinks it's a dream. Only when he becomes a witness again does he entrust himself to Igor. Of course, Igor doesn't believe him until he himself gets a vampire visit at night, which he can fend off. The camp leader strives for discipline, constantly imposes sanctions, but the teasing of the girls and the brutality among the boys continue. Valerka rescues himself in the food shack of Baba Nyura, the old kitchen helper who knows about the vampires because she was once one herself, able to save herself, but has been physically disabled ever since. She knows that the real danger comes from the good pioneers. Their loyalty to the rules seems exemplary, their decency and love of order are perceived as positive qualities, their charm as innate. This is exactly why they remain inconspicuous. Until the next moonrise reveals their true nature.

It turns out that for decades there have been many deaths among former summer camp inmates, but nobody noticed them because the children came from different cities and only died at home later. Who is the leader stratilat who always has to bite 13 children in order to survive the 13 moons of a year until the next summer camp and whose history seems to go back to the Russian Revolution? Igor and Valerka forge a rescuing plan for the closing ceremony, where a campfire will take place on the banks of the Volga. They know that the vampires avoid the river like the devil avoids holy water. They want to drive the leader stratilat into the food shack and starve him to death there so that he won't survive his lunar time. Otherwise only burning him alive would remain as last option.

A very tricky vampire novel about a highly topical ideological conflict that runs through the entire book on many levels: Independence of thought, dreaminess, the urge for freedom and the attempt to understand our complicated world – as a counterpart to the simple answers and blunt rules that have always been and still are set up, out of laziness of thought or just to enslave people. A novel that is not only straightforward and strong like a wooden post, but also follows the rules of the genre so well, that the reader doesn't even notice how he has already been bitten and infected.



THE AUTHOR

languages

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awards

2006 Yasnaya Polyana Award

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Aleksei Ivanov

Russian mystical horror thriller

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"Ivanov is the Russian Stephen King... Like him, he has written an honest genre novel without postmodern quirks or superfluous winking with the reader."

AFISHA

"Vampirism in the novel actually means the death of human thought as soon as it is caught in the rules of a particular group. And it doesn't matter whether it's party affiliation or class affiliation... You feel comfortable in their laps, you feel needed, but... that's not you anymore."

MEDIUM

"Seductive, plot-driven, very realistic despite the vampire bites."

FORBES

"Ivanov succeeds in the most important thing: one believes him this world of pubertal „leeches“, mysterious leaders and other bloodsuckers."

LITERATURNO

"The vampire plot, apparently mechanically incorporated into a retro setting, is not only the plot driving moment, but also very pragmatically expands the target group of the novel to younger readers, who were no longer in a pioneer summer camp, but have seen quite a few B-movies."

MEDUZA

Aleksei Ivanov was born in 1969 in Gorky (today Nizhny Novgorod). He grew up in Perm in the Urals. In 1996 he graduated from the University of Ekaterinburg with a degree in art history. He then worked as a caretaker, laboratory assistant, tourist guide, teacher, journalist and lecturer. His first publication in a magazine in 1990 was a fantasy novel. His first book publication was the mystical-historical novel „Heart of Parma“ 2003. 11 novels and 7 non-fiction books by him are now available with a total circulation of over 1.5 million. 5 books have been filmed, 5 more are currently being filmed. Aleksei Ivanov lives in Perm.

Aleksei Ivanov

Russian science fiction

Apocalypsis³ To Mars! The Good Man Inversion of Life

Science fiction. Eksmo Publishers. Moscow 2019-2022.

Maximov's novels deliver science fiction in the best tradition of the Strugatski brothers. After a long predominance of purely entertaining genre literature such as fantasy, horror or post-apocalypse, in Russia his books are seen as an original revival of philosophical science fiction. They are also timely parables exploring guilt and innocence, hell and paradise, life and spirit, nothingness and the morality of algorithms.

As though in parallel worlds or in different dimensions, the reader is taken along two plots lines which at first glance do not seem connected in any way. The connection only becomes clear in the course of or towards the end of the story. This alternation between parallel plotlines has become a trademark of Maximov.

"Oh man, a popular video blogger is writing novels... What's that going to be like? Well, I'm glad to be mistaken... His books have filled my inner world with darkness... And I got hooked on this one, soaking it up at night on my tablet screen... And every time I reach the end, he turns the whole story upside down and everything I thought while reading... Bravo!"

"If there is something missing in your life, something to turn your head and shift your perception, if you don't want a trivial plot, but surprises, sudden turns, if you want to feel something new while reading a book – then this is the book for you ... this is something real, something new in modern literature. It's a synthesis of fiction, an attack of post-modernism and the energy of experiment."

"The author combines all the right elements to make you want to read, together with the real hardcore of a sick fantasy. The plot is so confusing that it makes no sense to even speculate on how the story will end. And the hero himself turns out to be surprisingly alive and real, that you believe him... TO MARS! is not a run-of-the-mill novel, but a unique and living confirmation that Russian literature is quite alive."

LIVELIB Reviewer



THE AUTHOR

4.3 Mio YouTube followers
over 2.7 Mio listenings of
audio GATE TO HEAVEN
320,000 listenings of audio TO MARS!
and audio GOOD MAN
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all novels per year
over 200,000 sold print copies

awards

2021 Aelita Start Award
2021 Young Adult Content Award

sample translation available

full English for 3 novels

Max Maximov was born in Moscow in 1986. After high school, he first studied at the National University of Science and Technology MISiS, but was expelled for non-attendance. He switched to the Moscow College for Geodesy and Cartography and worked as a surveyor for eight years after graduating. At this time, he took up sports. He achieved a black belt in Aikido and became the winner of the Chekhov Cup in Karate in the Kumite section. In 2015, he started a YouTube channel called MaxMaximov. Currently the channel has about 4.3 million subscribers with more than a million daily views. In 2016 he started writing novels that immediately became self-publishing sensations with about 100,000 downloads per year. Since then, his work has been his YouTube channel and writing new books. He likes to play guitar and loves hardcore music. Maximov is married, has two children and lives with his family in Moscow.

Max Maximov

Russian science fiction horror

To Mars!

Scifi/ Horror. Eksmo. Moscow 2019. 317 pages

over 150,000 listenings of audioversion

available in full English

As a child, Ivan had to witness his parents' bodies being repeatedly possessed by monsters. With toy soldiers and stuffed animals, he created an army of helpers against fear. Later as an adult, Ivan dreams of not just becoming rich and successful, but of changing the world for the better. Because if mankind continues to go on as before, a global catastrophe is imminent. Ivan wants to build a new civilization on Mars in time. But suddenly Ivan starts to hear voices, then one voice, the voice of the author Max. But this author, who created Ivan, himself repeatedly has the reins taken out of his own hands. He needs Ivan's help to find out which evil force is playing its cruel game with both of them. In return, Ivan wants Max to help him carry out his idea of flying to Mars by having Max continue writing the book in that direction. Ivan sides with Max, even though the evil force has threatened to destroy all text files if Max with his writing tries to undo the consequences of the cruel parallel plot line. Also, in the life of author Max, places and periods of time suddenly shift. While Ivan, now a wealthy investor, is preparing with a team of scientists to launch the rocket to Mars, gravity suddenly disappears in the parallel world, the atmosphere is atomized, the sun is melting. Then years of normality return to Ivan's life. It's only when he goes to the opening of his spaceport that he is suddenly taken back to a parallel world and an endless forest populated by monsters. While Max suddenly disappears completely, the evil force finally reveals itself: Andrei, who had been separated from his parents and taken to an orphanage, while Max took his place living with his parents. And Ivan suddenly finds himself in a psychiatric hospital, his mother claiming during a visit that she had spent his entire childhood with him in clinics. His current cellmate, a „crazy“ lecturer, tells him about the simulacrum theory. This is Ivan's chance to prove that he is not crazy: if he can prove credibly that he is just a character from a book. He is released home for good behavior, but he finds nothing on the Internet about his Mars company. So, in the end he calls the reader for help as a final instance, who can and must decide who is who in this mirror cabinet of reality and delusion.

A psychologically and logically intricate plot, exciting like Borges or Kafka, but up to date with simulacra and cosmic dimensions, including theories about space and time.

In the spirit of: Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand



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Max Maximov

Russian science fiction horror

The Good Man

Scifi/ Horror. Eksmo. Moscow 2020. 200 pages

over 100,000 listenings of audioversion

available in full English

A weed of obviously extraterrestrial origin covers the Earth with tentacles. People near the plants are going crazy. But the plant doesn't only penetrate the brains via messenger substances, it creates terrible monsters from the living organisms it has swallowed. Unexpectedly, it turns out that only people with Down syndrome (DS) are immune to the destructive nature of the weeds. The Space Infection Institute has launched a new call to recruit volunteers to spray a weed killer into the root. Several groups have already moved towards the center of the parasite and have been able to establish a path through it with supply points in abandoned villages. None of these DS groups have been able to reach the source. Because the weeds are constantly spreading, the path to the source takes longer every day. No one has yet returned alive, because the DS people are also exposed to the no less dangerous mutants and monsters without protection.

After the death of their parents, a boy with DS, Kostya, and his sister live with a guardian who exploits and abuses them. The good-natured Kostya has always wanted to save the world and also wants to make himself and his sister independent with a lavish salary. Kostya lets himself be persuaded by the guardian to take on this life-threatening job. The guardian prevents the sister from finding out about it in time and collects the payment himself. Kostya and two companions receive a crash course on how to transport the chemical to the root of the plant to destroy the weeds. They are remote controlled via camera and headset. Kostya's controller is Alex.

Parallel to this, investigations (as flash-forwards) are underway into strange serial murders. Beside the corpses lie their internal organs without any visible external injuries. The victims are bandits, murderers, drug dealers and others who bring suffering into the world.

When Kostya is the only survivor of his group to make it to the root after being attacked by the monsters, it becomes clear that the weed is not an alien parasite. It is a plant that grows from the fifth dimension into the fourth dimension and from there into our three-dimensional world and further into two-dimensionality. Through a portal at the root Kostya falls into the fourth dimension, which from now on enables him not only to see into the past of the third dimension, but also to appear there himself in different places at completely different times. When he sees how the drunken guardian is about to rape his underage sister, he appears in the apartment and kills him. And then he continues his own mission to eradicate evil. And everyone suddenly becomes afraid to commit evil at all, because a person with Down's syndrome has voluntarily stayed in the fourth dimension to keep order in the world.

A parable about the two faces of good and evil and the one-dimensionality of our worldview



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full English for 3 novels

Max Maximov

Best of «The Most Scary Book»

Horror short stories. AST 2014-2022. 300 pages

M.S. Parfyonov has been dubbed the „godfather“ of Russian horror. He developed the concept of an anthology of scary stories unique in the world, in the compilation of which the readers and fans of the genre themselves take part. Thus was born the very first book, which became a huge success and marked the beginning of the entire «The Most Scary Book» series. The total circulation of the series is over 150,000 copies. Thanks to the series, authors such as Bobyleva, Parfenov, Kabir, Kozhin and Matyukhin became famous. A number of books have won literary awards. Individual works by these and other authors have been filmed, the film rights have been sold by others. Authors and publishers hold their own annual convention. «The Most Scary Book» is the face of Russian horror today.

„The literature of horror and the weird is truly international and enduring. When we look at history, the world we live in now, and speculate about the future, it is easy to ask the question: is any field of fiction more relevant? May black wings carry this anthology of horror fiction, from my peers in Russia, far and wide.“

ADAM NEVILL

„The concept of The Scariest Books is conspicuously ingenious and unique. Often it seems that the horror genre has run out of new ideas. Your anthology definitively proves we need not fear this will occur.“

THOMAS LIGOTTI

„Here, at last, is a collection of new voices, telling stories of horrors unleashed by monsters we have never encountered before. It is a long time since i felt authors inviting me to wallow in their perversities as these writers do. Who could resist? The forbidden beckons to is from terra incognita. Let us meet where the river runs red and the fish have human faces.“

CLIVE BARKER

„My best regards to my writer colleagues in Russia, and I hope everyone reads this book!“

ROBERT MCCAMMON

„The Scariest Book lives up to its name...every story will make you shudder like you have never shuddered before. Whatever you do, don't read this book before you meant to go to sleep...because you won't.“

GRAHAM MASTERON

„The Scariest Book is a wonderful example of continued excellence in horror fiction from my colleagues in Russia, the birthplace of some of the greatest authors of dark literature the world has ever known. This spine-tingler of an anthology is not to be missed!“

GREF F. GIFUNE

„A brilliantly innovative project. This is an exciting way to find wonderful new horror writers.“

SIMON CLARK

M.S. Parfenov et al

Russian horror

„Forever“ - Alexander Matyukhin

Natasha and Stas were once like brimstone. And the video store in the shed next to the school was more beautiful to them than any paradise. And then Stas went away to the big city, leaving Natasha in the outback of the Russian North, along with her loneliness and unhappy family. But many years later, a letter from his youth reaches him, and now he will definitely return. After all, it is not for nothing that one says „forever“ when one loves.

„Tsap-Tsap“ - Evgeny Shikov

Many rumors circulate about this swamp. Some speak of devils, others of witches. A little boy who made it back from there keeps talking about the Tsap. And went insane about it. But as always, there is a daredevil who wants to know more.

„Dribeis“ - Dmitry Kostyukevich

A Russian polar station drifting with an iceberg. Hydrologists studying the subglacial relief. A typical day at the North Pole. Diver Sergei Ivin descends into the ice hole for a dive and, hovering over the abyss of the ocean, begins to check the set steel markers. He is surrounded by a cold majestic landscape, myriads of ice crystals, the omnipresent mud, when suddenly something grabs him from behind.

„Beloved“ - Daria Bobyleva

The story about the unenviable fate of the boy Sanya, who at the age of seventeen chose his fateful path. He too had believed that witches did not exist, but life proved him wrong.

„America“ - Anatoly Umansky

Alaska during the war of Russians against native tribes. The inhabitants of a small fort can hardly repel the attacks of the Tlingit. Yet in these harsh latitudes lives something far more terrible than the savage tribes. And this creature intends to use the enmity between the Russians and the natives for its own ends.

„The Glacier“ - Oleg Kozhin

In a secret glacial cave used as a food storage facility, a researcher at a semi-abandoned polar station discovers not only missing reindeer carcasses, but also the body of an aborigine. It all looks like a black market where the recipient and supplier have not come to an agreement on how to share the loot. But then things happen on the station that don't quite fit with this simple version.

Mummer - Dmitry Tikhonov

During a church festival with a masked procession, two village boys encounter an unusual creature. One of the boys survives, but for how much longer?

„My Mother's Hands“ - Mikhail Pavlov

Ilya is a cheerful, sociable guy who comes from a large family. But suddenly a nightmarish witch creature appears, chasing him. Is it real? Where does it come from? Why did it choose him?

„Land of Cockroaches“ - Parfenov M.S.

Kostya has always struggled with complexes due to his provincial origins. Especially now that he is taking an apartment on the outskirts of Moscow. Nevertheless, he dreams of moving to the center one day. But the dream turns into a nightmare when an army of man-eating insects attacks the tenement.

„The Bridge“ - Parfenov M.S.

To find out what happened to his younger sister, who disappeared twenty years ago, Pasha returns to the old bridge not far from where he spent his childhood and where his sister was last seen.

„Snowballs“ - Parfenov M.S.

Alyosha is sad. His friends throw snowballs in the yard. Even fat Edik. Only Alyosha's grandmother strictly forbids him to go out on the street. Maybe steal the key to the locked apartment door and run to the boys? But where did grandma hide them? Also, she should finally turn off that stupid radio on which some liars have been warning non-stop for the last few weeks: „Beware...Potentially dangerous contacts...Dangerous...Dangerous...Wait for help...“

„The Gift of the Tsar“ - Elena Shchetinina

The coronation of Nicholas II is a real holiday. On this occasion, don't miss the distribution of royal gifts. That's what the people think as they flock to the Khodynka field and push their way forward more and more impatiently. But instead of gifts, many find a horrible death in the field.

M.S. Parfenov et al

Russian horror

The Wooden People

Mystery horror novel. AST. Moscow 2021. 507 pages

The facts: After the christianization of Russia, old Russian wooden sculptures derived from Slavic pagan statues were still allowed in churches for a while. Finally, in 1722, the Orthodox Church banned all three-dimensional images of saints. During the Petrine period, almost all wooden figures were removed from the churches and destroyed: chopped up or burned.

The fiction: some statues, hidden by fanatical followers, escaped this „genocide“ and either came to life independently or were breathed into life by others in a secret ritual. These wooden people do not get sick, can see well in the dark, do not grow old and do not die, they can only burn or die of an unhealed crack. Their conspiratorial activity consists mainly in maintaining and increasing their own people.

Antip, the main character, made of wood and brought to life 299 years ago, has been restoring the bodies of statues over the centuries and preparing them for the rite of „awakening“ in addition to his camouflage occupations as ship builder, railroad sleeper producer and now cabinet maker. Most recently, he stole the head of an almost 1,000 year old pagan idol, soaked in sacrificial blood, fear and pain, from the famous historian Voroshilov, who owes his academic career to the wooden people. Without a head there is no awakening. Since the break-in, Antip has been harassed and hunted by the police as well as by an academic mafia that deals in fake figures. Something goes wrong during the awakening: not only does the pagan idol come to life, but also a small figure carved only as a model. Suddenly Antip has a kind of daughter and he is beset by human emotions. And the more Antip feels like a person, the more he is seduced by worldly temptations, the more he deviates from the original path and commits more sins: from more harmless to deadly ones.

Rubanov's novel is one of the few in this genre where a (wooden) „homunculus“ himself tells the story of his life. In a kind of magical realism, we learn from his three hundred years of life, built as flashbacks within the action in the present and now, in which all the evil that weighs on him, as well as the new love that uplifts him, is approaching an inevitable culmination point.



THE AUTHOR

awards

National Bestseller Award 2020
Yasnaya Polyana Award 2017

“Antip's memories, which sketch the historical catastrophes of Russia as the misfortunes of an anthropomorphic other, are very original. This novel can be put on a par with Sorokin's „Ice-trilogy“ or Neil Gaiman's „American Gods“ ... Especially I would also like to emphasize the depth with which Rubanov devotes himself to the topic, the breadth of his point of view and the relevance of his presentation.” NATSBEST

“The new book by Andrei Rubanov ... is a successful novel of ideas that questions the values and spiritual identity of people at the beginning of the 21st century.” GORKY

“The pages of the novel about the wooden girl Dunja, Antip's unwanted daughter, are extremely exciting, and Rubanov should definitely write a continuation of her fate.” NOVY MIR

Andrei Rubanov was born in 1969 in a village near Moscow. He spent his childhood in the village. After graduating from the Faculty of Journalism at Moscow State University, he first worked as a correspondent for a newspaper, then as a construction worker, driver, bodyguard, and also had his own business. In 2005, he published his first novel. Since then, he has made a name for himself not only as an author of mystical or historical novels, but also as a successful screenwriter for cinema. Rubanov lives with his family in Moscow.

Andrei Rubanov

Russian diaspora horror thriller

Vixen Hill

Novel. Moscow. 2022. 716 pages

The action of this horror thriller in the genre of mystic realism takes place in the Far East, on the border of the Soviet Union and Manchuria (China) in 1945, right after the end of World War II and the Japanese occupation of the region. The novel combines the history of the USSR, Chinese mythology, Japanese genetic engineering and Siberian shamanism.

After his adventurous escape from the GULAG, prisoner Max Kronin journeys to Vixen Hills: a village in the middle of a no man's land on the Manchurian border, in the hope of finding his long-lost wife. Vixen Hills is a place of strange miracles and supernatural phenomena – an appropriate hunting ground for Max who, before the war, was trained by mentalist extraordinaire and KGB officer Gleb Aristov to manipulate his own dreams, trance-walk, predict the future, and bring lost people back to reality. But just like all the others who once found themselves in this cursed place, Max does not find what he is looking for. And he does not realise that he is still being manipulated by his former trainer Aristov, whose ultimate goal is to find and deploy the mythical Terracotta Army. To conquer the world, Aristov wants to resurrect this Army with the Waters of Death and Life, a mighty biological weapon developed by Japanese scientists in Vixen Hills, where they conduct inhuman experiments in their laboratory for breeding the perfect soldier. But so does a German count, with his own links to Max Kronin. Here Soviet soldiers fall in love with Chinese were-foxes. Here KGB agents face a taoist master who knows the secret of immortality. Here those from fascist Ahnenerbe and those from the Soviet Secret Department represent one and the same ruthless totalitarian monster. Here the war never ends.

This is a spectacular and frightful trip to the heart of darkness, where the protagonists not only find themselves contending with shamans, Old Believers, the KGB and the Red Army, a hypnotists and a Tao Master, but everyone finds exactly what he or she has deserved. Some find love, others find death, but everyone finds the only appropriate fate predestined either by God or by the devil.

"Starobinets doesn't let the reader relax for a minute as she manages to keep up the hellish pace over seven hundred and something pages."
MEDUZA (Galina Yuzefovich)



THE AUTHOR

translations
over 20 languages

awards
2021 Spanish Celsius-232

2018 ESFS award
«Best European Sci-fi author»

2017 Winner Imaginales
festival in Epinal/ France

2016 Grand Prix of Utopiales
Sci-Fi book festival/ France

2014 National Bestseller Russia

2014 Prix Masterton

2014 Winner «The Portal»
Scifi Assembly Ukraine

sample translation available
full english

Anna Starobinets was born in Moscow in 1978. She is a Russian and Israeli citizen, writer and scriptwriter who works in various genres: sci-fi, dystopias and horrors for adults, fairy and detective stories for children. She is the widow of Alexander Garros, a critically acclaimed Latvian author. Her anti-government views have forced Starobinets to escape from Russia with her two children and dog in spring 2022.

Anna Starobinets

Russian diaspora horror

Awkward Age

Horror novella and collection of short stories. Moscow 2005. 240 pages

Publishers: Japan/ Kawade Shobo, Turkey/ Fol Kitap

Awards: 2014 Prix Masterton

A boy turning into the anthill is the striking metaphor of the awkward age developed in the head title. An ant-queen gets into his head through the ear when he is six and starts setting the ant colony inside his body, believing that such symbiotic existence can open the new horizons for the ants. The story sounds in three authentic voices: the boy's mother's, his twin-sister's and his own. The most stunning part of the novella is the boy's diary. His voice, so touching in the first entries, little by little turns into the collective voice of the ants living inside him and making him obey their needs. Having started as a family story about a divorced mother with two kids who have to live through the awkward age, the narrative switches unexpectedly to a nearly Kafkaesque one.

Two lovers in the apocalyptic Moscow settings, neither of whom knows that they are both dead.

An agent working for a "coincidence management" agency, who turns out to be chasing himself.

A lonely guy who cherishes a saucepan forgotten in the fridge and thus turns it into a loveable monster.

A man traveling between two towns unable to figure out which one of them is real.

A child who kills his mother for not keeping the rules of his secret game.



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"....wickedly clever talent of this young "Queen of Russian Horror"."
TMT MAGAZINE

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Anna Starobinets