

"Fantastic and fantastical." —LOS ANGELES TIMES

33

MOMENTS OF HAPPINESS

St. Petersburg Stories

INGO SCHULZE



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33 Moments of Happiness: St. Petersburg Stories Ingo Schulze , John E. Woods

An intriguing, fabulously bizarre debut collection of short stories by prize-winning German writer Ingo Schulze, author of *Simple Stories*.

These thirty-three macabre, often comical short pieces revolve around moments of odd bliss—moments seized by characters who have found ways to conquer the bleakness of everyday life in the chaotic world of post-communist Russia.

Peopled by Mafia gunmen, desperate young prostitutes, bewildered foreign businessmen, and even a trio of hungry devils, the stories are by turns tragic and bleakly funny. From a sly retelling of the legend of St. Nicholas featuring a rich American named Nick, to a lavish gourmet feast in which the young female cook ends up as the main dish, these stories are above all playful and even surreal—and many of them are masterful tributes to Russian writers from Gogol to Nabokov.

33 Moments of Happiness: St. Petersburg Stories Details

Date : Published June 5th 2001 by Vintage (first published August 1st 1997)

ISBN : 9780375700040

Author : Ingo Schulze , John E. Woods

Format : Paperback 320 pages

Genre : Short Stories, European Literature, German Literature, Fiction

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From Reader Review 33 Moments of Happiness: St. Petersburg Stories for online ebook

Marc says

After charging in delight through the first ten or so stories, marveling at their freshness and gentle fantasy, I gave up on page 212, defeated by the repetition (33 stories is too much!) and the cloying replication of classic Russian prose styles. Defeated.

Nicholas Beck says

33 Moments of Bleak really. The happiness is fleeting and buried deep in these tales of Russia post perestroika. Short vignettes of Soviet life amidst a harsh climate both personal and political, I struggled with these short stories and never really seemed able to connect to any of the characters. Apparently they are based on a myriad of Russian stories and there's a short glossary at the back which provides some helpful connections. Have to say that unless you have read a wide range of Soviet literature, you'll likely miss many of the allusions.

will says

Schulze has some very solid short stories in this collection, but others fall a little flat. The best are truly surprising and precise.

Inaniel says

Nope, i didn't enjoy it. It's a collection a very short episodes (not even stories?) but without a connection. I found it hard to follow.

Meter says

i love this book.

Chiara Tinelli says

Una noia mortale! Poteva essere un capolavoro, invece per me è stato uno strazio dall'inizio alla fine!

Lawrence says

Too overwhelmed by 33 moments of happiness frankly to give a damn. Perhaps there could have been far fewer moments to endure. While some of the stories were marginally interesting, many were just downright dull. It's an exercise in stylistics, references completely missed by me, and a largely tedious set of exercises at that. Done with Ingo Schulze, I am happy to say. He's had his chance to generate my interest and he's repeatedly failed. He just doesn't seem to have anything to say; that perhaps explains why he needs far too many pages to say it.

Ted says

"Tossing" this book, though that reads like more of a rejection than I really mean. I'm really dropping it in the Better World Books bin near where I live. It has no underlining!

After all, the front cover has an L.A. Times quote, "Fantastic and fantastical!" Who the hell am I to say that these stories are not memorable? *But in fact I suspect that the L.A. Times reviewer couldn't tell us a single thing about any of these stories, today.* Still, as any decent book, it was not a waste of time to read.

[Original non-review]

I'm sure I enjoyed these stories, since I don't finish a book if I find it a drag. But after 10 years I can't remember a thing about them.

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Previous review: A Canticle for Leibowitz

Random review: Le Cid

Next review: Another World *Pat Barker*

Previous library review: The World of Yesterday *Stefan Zweig*

Next library review: The Rings of Saturn *Sebald*
