

FICTION

A contemporary absurdist rollercoaster written in the best Russian tradition

Cocaine

ALEKSANDR SKOROBOGATOV

The main character of 'Cocaine' is trying to make the world a better place through words, but also with the help of a hammer and a gigantic nail. Why? Because, according to Dostojevski, he has to. And also because this world of ours is becoming all too frightening.

Recently abandoned by the love of his life, our protagonist passes his days wandering through the streets of Moscow with nothing but his imagination to keep him going. He fantasises about epic battles in pubs, allots himself the roles of hero or villain in murder cases, and all of a sudden he receives an invitation to travel to Stockholm: he has won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Skorobogatov aims high, mixes the burlesque with the tragic and gets away with it brilliantly.

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An enigmatic Nobel Prize committee awaits him, the dead are resurrected, and on top of that he rediscovers his former love. This can't be true, the reader keeps thinking. But the author, being the creator of his characters, can do with them as he pleases. And so an intriguing cat-and-mouse-game between author, protagonist, and reader begins.

'Cocaine' is a no-holds-barred celebration of the seemingly limitless possibilities of the human imagination. It is a literary rollercoaster ride in the very best Russian tradition.

Snort this literary 'Cocaine'! It is a fever dream, a maelstrom, a disconcerting but exquisite kaleidoscope.

CUTTING EDGE



AUTHOR



Aleksandr Skorobogatov (b. 1963), one of the most original Russian writers of the post-communist era, has lived in Antwerp since the 1990s. He has written short stories, essays and novels.

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