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Black Snow



Synopsis

A new edition of Bulgakov's blistering satire about the great Russian director Stanislavski, inventor of "Method acting," part of Melville House's reissue of the Bulgakov backlist in Michael Glenny's celebrated translations. In 1926, a play based on Mikhail Bulgakov's novel *The White Guard* premiered at the prestigious Moscow Arts Theatre and it was an immediate and long-lasting success that laid the ground for the rest of Bulgakov's career as a playwright and novelist. But it was not an entirely positive experience, and this novel, written near the end of Bulgakov's life, skewers the theatrical fraternity he had been a part of for many years, and the Stalinist system of censorship that suppressed his work. *Black Snow* is the story of Maxudov, a young playwright whose play is chosen, almost at random, to be performed by the legendary Independent Theatre, and the chaos that ensues. The two co-directors of the theater, modeled after Stanislavski and his co-director, battle to control the production, star actresses throw daily fits, and with each rehearsal the chances of the play ever being ready to perform recedes. The ultimate backstage novel and a brilliant satire from one of the greatest modern Russian writers.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A delightful, well crafted, somewhat surreal comedy. It is a satire of literary and theatrical Moscow in the 1920's, specifically the Moscow Arts Theater and all the egos connected with it -- including Konstantin Stanislavsky, creator of the method style of acting. For me, this novel has three elements that make a good story: a) a plot line, b) a protagonist who wants something and antagonists who get in his way, c) good characterizations. I actually enjoyed it more than his masterpiece, *THE*

MASTER AND THE MARGARITA. I love Russian novels but sometimes find them mean spirited: beatings, abuse, discrimination, the long tradition of boys torturing cats, etc.. And Jews, village idiots, and political prisoners tend to get it in the neck. But BLACK SNOW is a more light hearted affair, a delicious black comedy.

I really like Bulgakov. But this relatively short book was a bit of work to get through. Events and pace did not develop much throughout the story. But, the very end was a great surprise that almost made the read worth the effort. But pleasure reading shouldn't be an effort. One could easily read the first half of the book and then skip to the very end and get the same result.

This is superb writing. Bulgakov is a genius. Sonia Meyer Dosha, flight of the Russian Gypsies

I enjoyed the style and of a simple entry into this authors work.

Your description of Black snow is way off mark: the Black snow is NOT based on Bulgakov's novel White guard, which was a source for another play The Turbins' days. Black snow is based on another work ; The theatre novel (in literal translation of the Russian title)..

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