



About the author:

YANA VAGNER was born in Moscow in 1973 into a bilingual family. Her Czech mother came to Moscow in the 60s to study Russian language and literature. Yana graduated from Moscow State University with a major in management and has worked as an interpreter, an anchorperson on radio, and a logistics manager, which allowed her to travel extensively throughout Africa, Europe and Latin America.

She started writing *To the Lake* as a weekly blog while a flu epidemic swept through Moscow. It has since become a bestselling novel, translated into multiple languages and adapted into a Netflix series.

Yana Vagner lives with her husband, teenage son, and two dogs in their country house on the outskirts of Moscow.

Selected Bibliography

2024 — **The Tunnel**, *novel*

2020 — **2068**, *novel*

2017 — **Accomplices**, *novel*

2012 — **Vongozero: Truly Human**, *novel*

2011 — **Vongozero**, *novel*

Longlisted for the **New Literature Prize 2012**

Nominated for the **National Bestseller Prize 2012, 2018**

Shortlisted for **Prix Russophonie 2015**

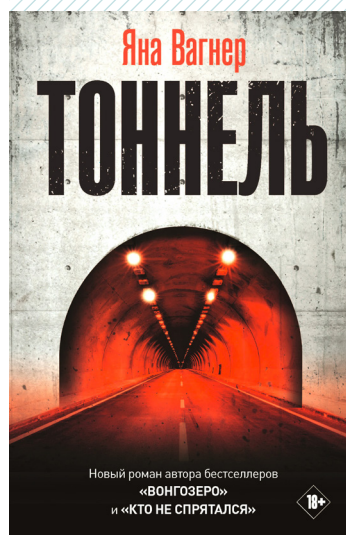
Shortlisted for **Prix Bob Morane 2015** (France)

Finalist of the **Grand Prix des lectrices Elle 2015** (France)

Longlisted for the **Big Book Award 2017**

Financial Times Book of the Year 2021 (UK)

Herald Book of the Year 2021 (UK)



The Tunnel

A much-anticipated new novel from the internationally bestselling author of *To the Lake*, adapted into a compelling Netflix series and endorsed by none other than Stephen King himself. Yana Vagner is unsurpassed in navigating through the intricate shifts in human behavior under extreme circumstances.

Elena Shubina Publishing (AST)

Novel, 2024
569 pp

Translation rights sold

French Robert Laffont
Bulgarian Labirint

Audio rights sold

Vimbo

Film rights sold

A lengthy road tunnel, connecting Moscow with its suburban areas, stretches beneath a river's depths. It's the end of a July weekend, and traffic is congested: elderly dacha owners with cars packed to the brim with freshly harvested fruits and vegetables, families with infants securely nestled in child seats alongside bored teenagers slumping in the backseats, a smattering of pick-up trucks, vans, and refrigerated lorries, a vigilant police car, an opulent executive-class vehicle with tinted windows, and a tattered taxi blaring raucous music — a typical cross-section of urban diversity.

Midway through the tunnel, where radio signals have long vanished, and mobile phones remain deprived of reception, the steady flow of cars abruptly halts. Initially, people are patient assuming it's an accident up ahead or another road closure for an official motorcade. Yet, the gridlock persists, and after a while, people begin to wonder, leaving their vehicles and striking up conversations. Impatience eventually gets the better of some, and a small group ventures toward the tunnel's exit, embarking on a several-kilometer trek. Their hasty return is accompanied by a panicking crowd and troubling news — there's no way out of the tunnel anymore. An explanation eludes them, rumors spread like wildfire, and panic takes root. The crowd retreats toward the tunnel's entrance, but it's barricaded with imposing railings and concrete gates — the same gates that had sealed the exit, tragically thwarting the escape attempt of a reckless car.

Initially, civility prevails as people await rescue. They exchange jokes, share water, and console each other's children. However, as hours pass without any sign of rescue, mobile signals gone, and isolation sets in — both from the external world and from different segments of the lengthy tunnel — reason gradually dissipates, replaced by mounting paranoia.

A sequence of unforeseeable events transforms law-abiding citizens into a frenzied mob. First, a criminal seizes the opportunity to escape from the police car, killing one officer in the process and acquiring a gun. Next, a group of contract construction workers resort to drastic measures, severing an electricity cable in a futile bid to breach the tunnel's walls. At the same time, an elderly, snake-like official finds access to a covert emergency bunker with a capacity limited to sixty occupants, prompting his assistant to execute a specific protocol to select those who might survive.

Following the massive electrical failure, the trapped individuals, confined beneath ground with limited and rapidly depleting air, begin to act as though they're living through Judgment Day. As tensions escalate, they uncover the existence of a bunker stocked with air, weapons, and essential provisions, but discover that the available space proves insufficient for all.

In less than thirty hours since the lockdown, the gates slowly swing open, welcoming rescuers and ambulances. The true cause of the catastrophe is revealed to be an unprecedented cyber attack targeting the city's infrastructure and key transportation hubs. Emerging from the tunnel, exhausted and shaken, survivors feel as though they've spent an eternity underground, miraculously escaping what can only be described as hell. However, for some, salvation never arrived.

Nominated for the **National Bestseller Award 2018**Longlisted for the **Big Book Award 2017**Nearly 70,000 copies
sold**Elena Shubina Publishing (AST)**

Novel, 2017

542 pp

Translation rights sold

French Mirobole Editions

French Poche

Czech Omega/Dobrovsky/ now available

Lithuanian Alma Littera

Film rights sold

Accomplices

Following the success of her bestselling snowy road thriller, *Vongozero*, Yana Vagner sets her new stand-alone detective mystery drama in ice and snow, but ignites it with passion, love and hatred to a blazing extreme.

A film crew arrives to a mountain skiing resort for a film shoot. The film producer rents a secluded hotel on the mountain top a week before the shoot for a friendly getaway. On the first night of the weekly vacation the lead actress is brutally murdered: someone pierces her twice with a ski pole and pushes her over the parapet, down to the rocks, leaving to die under a commencing ice rain.

In the morning the group discovers that the cableway (the only connection with the outside world) is covered with ice and de-energized, the transmitter is crushed, no mobile signal available in the area, — and there is a dead body, frozen to a rocky mountain slope, a few meters away from a skiing path.

They are nine-eight lifetime friends and a morose, somewhat sinister, hotel manager — and one of them is obviously a murderer. Being cut off from the world, they run their own investigation. No one has an alibi, each has a confession to make, and each might want Sonya, the film's star, dead. For years Sonya, an ingenious manipulator, a prodigious actress, ruthlessly and cynically exploited and manipulated her friends, feeding on their love and despairs.

The friends will have to discover unpleasant truths about each other, face the dark secrets of their own past, and break off the ice shell of their lifetime illusions.

The first suspicion falls on Tatiana, the script writer. Tatiana, an author of one novel heralded by critics as a “bright promising debut”, could not produce a close match to her first breakthrough novel and had to switch to writing scripts. Her bitter, austere and even aggressive personality clashes against her husband's conforming and benign nature. The secret glue of the marriage is Tatiana's infertility — a sad side-effect of an abortion she made in the early years of their young marriage, an operation prompted by the husband. Tatiana silently blames her husband for her failure as a mother, while Petya's feeling of guilt keeps him loyal to their otherwise failed marriage. Petya has been hopelessly in love with Sonya, the victim, for years.

Masha, a smart journalist, has known Sonya since school, having introduced Sonya to the rest of the group. Herself a victim of a family abuse as a child, Masha today is a charity activist, providing help for sick children from all over Russia. Masha has no family, and their friendship is an ersatz of relations she subconsciously avoids.

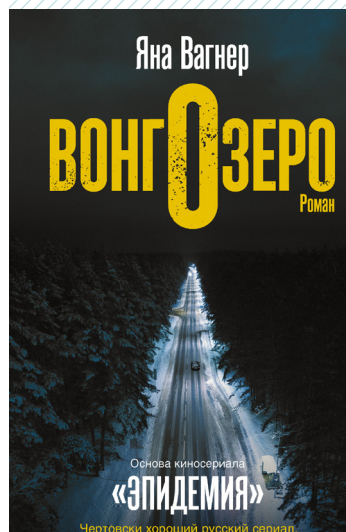
There is Vadik, once a gifted and promising film director, now an alcoholic, wasting his talent in production of countless cheap soap-operas. For years he has been desperately trying to finance his own feature film, but without luck. For this failure he blames Sonya, a celebrity who could help through her connections, but would prefer to seek investment for less risky TV projects.

There is Ivan, an affluent businessman and the film's producer. With his often indecent generosity Ivan continuously attempts to overcome the social gap between him and the rest of the group: for the rest he will always remain an unsophisticated provincial in an elitarian group of Moscovites. For Laura, Ivan's young wife, this social difference is of no importance. With her looks of a fashion model and the same provincial childhood, Laura seems no more than a shallow hunter for Ivan's fortune. However, the girl is truly in love with her husband and is painfully dependent on him, desperately — and in vain — searching for his affection. But Laura, too, has a secret, and Sonya was the only one who knew what the young wife would hide from the adored husband.

Last but not least there is Egor, a successful lawyer, who cheats on his wife Liza. A house-wife incarnate, Lisa replaced a love for her husband with a dedication to their home — a dream-house that she so beautifully and passionately manages. Lisa knows of her husband's infidelity, this is a silent part of their marriage treaty, but what if one of the affairs, their affair with Sonya, has crossed the invisible line?

During an improvised seclusion in an ice cell next to the mutilated dead body of a friend, the group will be in turn investigators, testifiers, and even judges, but essentially will all remain accomplices. The heroes discover that their friendship — based on lies, illusions and masks they eagerly put on — is a wobbly construction that shall not endure, and Sonya's murder has become the conviction to them all.

In this flawlessly written drama, Vagner masterly melds mystery suspense, a close character study, flaming emotions and social background. Vagner's recognizable “avalanche prose” style works with brilliance in this complex drama, making for an intense and a true page-turning read.



Eksmo
2011

Elena Shubina Publishing (AST)
Novel, 2020
448 pp

Translation rights sold

English UK Skyscraper /original publisher
English UK Swift Press / new publisher
English US — Deep Vellum
French Mirobole Editions
French paperback Poche
Swedish Ersatz
Slovakian Ikar / now available
Slovenian Mladinska knjiga
Czech Euromedia / now available
Polish Zysk
Lithuanian Alma Littera
Latvian Zvaigzne
Estonian Varrak
Mongolian Nepko
Arabic AS Publishers / now available
Serbian Publik Praktikum
Greek Livanis Publishing
Ukrainian Book Club «Family Leisure»
Hungarian Helikon
Bulgarian Labirint

Film rights sold

Art Pictures, Russia
TV show acquired by Netflix Originals in September 2020
TV series premiered April 2019
Fresh TV Fiction selection of 2020 MIPCOM

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Shortlisted for **Prix Russophonie 2015**

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Finalist of the **Grand Prix des lectrices Elle 2015**

Financial Times Book of the Year 2021

Herald Book of the Year 2021

Vongozero

In her debut post-apocalyptic thriller Yana Vagner refers simultaneously to Stephen King's *The Stand*, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* and the popular TV show *Man vs. the Wild* — and yet the author concocts a strikingly visionary survival story in its own right. Written at the time of the H1N1 flu epidemic and coming out as weekly entries in Vagner's blog, *Vongozero* — a haunting and arresting tale of a young woman who attempts to survive with her family during the throes of a pandemic — had already won thousands of readers before its publication as a book, setting off a heated auction among major Russian publishers. It has since become a bestselling novel, translated into multiple languages and adapted into a Netflix series.

What begins as a flu epidemic rapidly transmutes into a national catastrophe; but in the first days there's little panic. Anya, the story's narrator, 36-years old, was married three years before the events and now resides with her husband Sergei and her teenage son Misha in their country house outside of Moscow. They remain oblivious to the scope of the danger until the authorities send out troops to close down the major cities for entry, dooming their inhabitants to a swift yet painful death. Panic triggers violence, looting and devastation.

Anya and Sergei have both left family members behind in Moscow, and while Sergei succeeds in rescuing his ex-wife with their 3-year old son, Anya's mother gets infected and dies in the city under siege. Anya's father arrives just prior to the appearance of the first looters in the settlement, a direct warning to the family. They choose to flee to a shabby getaway house at the Vongozero lake near the Finnish border, where Sergei had stayed a few times on hunting trips. Born out of necessity, the expedition grows into eight adults and three children in four crossovers, loaded with belongings and fuel. Mortal danger draws together this weird and ill-assorted group of fellow travelers, speeding to the north of the rapidly deteriorating country.

Scheduled as a 48-hour journey, the road trip turns into twelve days of nightmare, dreary anticipation of grief,

worry, and struggle. As this highway trip escalates into a test of ultimate survival, the fellow travelers have to find the strength and resources not only to fight against the looming external dangers, but to face the deepest corners of themselves. There are no guarantees, no rules, and no truths outside those that help them to survive. The road challenges the limits of human nature, measuring compassion against the thirst for living, the strength of family ties against jealousy and exasperation — and forces each traveler to pay the utmost cost for survival.

The sweeping avalanche of a road story stops short at the destination point: a tiny shelter on the shore of the ice-covered Vongozero lake in the freezing taiga forest. The protagonists now have time to weep for those who failed to reach the final point and to attempt to build out of the ruins and rubble a new routine, a new code, a new life, and possibly new selves.

As horrifying as one's worst nightmares, the novel reads as a very plausible scenario. Yana Vagner demonstrates outstanding writing skills and deep psychological insight as she sets out the simplest and at the same time the most complicated question before her characters and readers: what does it take to remain human in the face of mortal danger?

Complete
English & French
translation
available