



About the author:

**ALLA GORBUNOVA** was born in Leningrad in 1985 and studied philosophy at St. Petersburg State University. She is a poet and the author of several books of prose. The collection of short stories, *It's the End of the World, My Love*, became the most discussed literary publication in 2020 and received The New Literature Prize 2020. Gorbunova received several nominations for the National Bestseller Prize, her prose entered long lists of the Big Book Award in 2020 and 2021. With her poetry, Alla Gorbunova won the Debut Prize 2005 and the Andrei Bely Prize 2019. Her poems and prose have been translated into many languages. Deep Vellum Publishing launches Gorbunova's prose in the English translation in 2023.

### *Selected Bibliography*

2022 — **The Summer**, *autofiction, novel*

2021 — **Another Matter**, *short stories*

2020 — **It's the End of the World, My Love**, *short stories*

2017 — **Ings & Oughts**, *short stories*

### **The New Literature Award 2020**

Longlisted for the **Big Book Award 2021, 2020**

Nominated for the **National Bestseller Prize 2020, 2017**

### **Andrei Bely Prize 2019**

Shortlisted for the **New Literature Award 2018**

Nominated for **XXIX Premio Letterario Camaiore 2017** (Italy)

Shortlisted for **Andrei Bely Prize 2011**

### **Debut Prize 2005**

Nominated for the **National Bestseller Prize 2020**Nominated for the **New Literature Award 2021****Elena Shubina Publishing (AST)**

Short stories, 2021

221 pp

## Another Matter

A collection of brilliant short stories that's equal parts Kafka, Chekhov, and sketch comedy.

Intelligent and emotional, heartfelt and sardonic, imaginative and gritty, Alla Gorbunova's gemlike miniatures are a serious literary accomplishment. In her third book of prose, the award-winning St. Petersburg writer reveals the extraordinary and the meaningful in the everyday. Set in Moscow and Petersburg in the troubled nineties and aughts, these philosophical, frightening, and mordantly funny tales feature hitchhikers and street artists, over-protective grandparents and terrible boyfriends, teenage outcasts and lifelong rebels, philosophers and schoolchildren. And all the members of this misfit cast are transformed by Gorbunova's unique and generous storytelling, redeemed through wit, close observation, and grace.

Throughout this poignant and hilarious collection, Gorbunova draws on her own life as a rebellious teenager, university student, accomplished poet, and, eventually, a mother. For a young girl, an angry lapdog be-

comes the world's most dangerous animal. A promising future as a professor somehow dead-ends into a day job as a nude artist's model. A juvenile prank at a high school reunion becomes a final farewell to a beloved relative. A rusty old alarm-clock is the key to understanding the nature of time, and a parent's quest to retrieve her son's toy car is a testament both to unconditional love and to the futility of human effort.

Gorbunova's stories borrow from philosophical thought experiments, contemporary autofiction, and a long Russian tradition of funny anecdotes. As usual, she handles profound metaphysical questions with a deceptively light touch, and the results are both inimitable and unforgettable.

### Selected quotes

Alla Gorbunova's prose is deeply authentic, and speaks to all sorts of readers — from authoritative literary critics, artists, and philosophers, to college and high school students. This book is no exception. Hilarious, sad, poignant, and occasionally frightening, these wonderfully lively tales are shot through with the light of her soul, the light of “another matter.”

Lyrical sketches that are profound rather than long — with something in them of medieval exempla, the Japanese *zuihitsu*, and the comic anecdote, in which everything is just fine, except when it isn't. Many of these tales are as paradoxical as their heroine, who remains somehow at a distance from everyday life while being in the middle of it all. As she herself admits, over half of her consciousness is an inferno of anxiety and terror, while the rest is in a primeval paradise wherein where evil is impossible.

*Ksenia Buksha*

*the prize-winning author of The Freedom Factory*

With her third book of prose Gorbunova develops the tradition of concocting texts on the borderline between reality and fiction. In part, it is diary notes, in part — adventures of her lyrical hero, or both.

*prochtenie.org*

The anecdotes from the blurred life in this collection under a snowy-white cover is a bubble wrap carefully preserving the anti-matter (that Gorbunova coined). Alla Gorbunova is not at haste with sharing it, as it is too intimate. More intimate, probably, than she herself. She tells about her son, about her current experience, and it feels that she is more afraid of sharing those, than stories from her past, retold and repeated. Gorbunova probes the water with her little finger, offering us a sample of her intimate revelations, as she wants to make sure if the water is too cold for a substance that fine.

*Gorky.media*

The material world is important. The transcendental can permeate things. Things can accumulate memory and time. They can speak and think. Sometimes I get to hear their thoughts. Strictly speaking, these are not thoughts in our habitual understanding, but a certain murmur, noise, movement, tension — something happening inside the matter, though nothing semantically meaningful. Things are restless on the inside.

*says Alla Gorbunova*

Nominated for the **National Bestseller Prize 2018**Shortlisted for the **New Literature Award 2018**

**Limbus Press**  
Short stories, 2017

**Elena Shubina Publishing (AST)**  
Short stories, 2021  
240 pp

*Translation rights sold*  
World English Deep Vellum  
Bulgarian Scalino  
Italian LietoColle

## Ings & Oughts

A testament to the powers of the imagination from one of Russia's best contemporary writers, *The Lives of Monsters and Other Stories* is an uncanny masterpiece with echoes of Dante, Beckett, and Borges.

Grouped according to themes of romance, philosophy, fate, fantasy and fable, Gorbunova's debut collection of stories takes a jaundiced view of the world, turning a magical lens on all-too-familiar problems. There is the woman who is horrified to discover that her husband doesn't have a soul and the university professor who unwittingly wanders through a post-Soviet hell. Violence and romance hound the employees at a sun-bleached country market, and myth meets modernity when Scylla and Charybdis run into dating woes.

Not since Calvino has a writer twisted the art of the fairy tale to create as stunning a catalogue of miracles and horrors. Gorbunova's stories are filled with ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances, as well as extraordinary people caught up in daily mundanity. Long turning the heads of Russian audiences with her wild and wonderful award-winning poetry, Gorbunova turns here to playful explorations of philosophi-

cal concerns about life, being, and meaning, combining clever satire and shocking flights of fancy into an imaginative menagerie all her own. *The Lives of Monsters and Other Stories* is sure to put one of Russia's youngest and most brilliant literary stars onto the international stage.

*Ings and Oughts is my first book of prose. I believe it has some drive and compassion. I wanted to name it Tales For Nutties, then came about with To Ashes, and then came the final title, Ings & Oughts. Yet Tales for Nutties is an important part of the text and it defines its audience, too. To Ashes is the name of the story about a man walking in sunglasses in winter because he did not want to see the world to its ashes, by watching and burning it to ashes by the act of viewing. So now I told you about two secret planes of my book, and now you are to decide what is "ings" and "oughts" here.*

**Alla Gorbunova**