



About the author:

KONSTANTIN ZARUBIN is a professor of English language and linguistic studies at Dalarna University in Sweden. He writes fiction and essays, the latter with a focus on gender (female) studies and social issues. He is also a singer and songwriter. He moved to Sweden in 2008, where he now lives with his wife. The author's website – <https://kostia.me>.

Selected Bibliography

- 2023 — **New Science Fiction From L.**, *novel*
- 2021 — **The Red List of Peace Street**, *novella and short stories*
- 2021 — **Chestnut Freyja**, *novellas*
- 2021 — **Misha, It's Elephants All Around**, *novel*
- 2019 — **A Mayfly Walked Along the Shore**, *novel*
- 2019 — **The Russian Heart Beats for All**, *novel*

Shortlisted for the **New Horizons Award 2023**



Meduza
Novel, 2024
190 pp

Audio rights sold
Litbuk

The Russian Heart Beats for All

This alarmingly prophetic anti-utopia and a bitter social satire from Konstantin Zarubin, a professor at Dalarna University in Sweden, reads unlike any other literary warning. Surgically acute, bold, and smart, the novel accentuates the most painful aspects in the social and political catastrophe, from which Russia and Europe suffer today.

In the alternative 2023 Russia is torn in parts by a civilian war. European countries try to cope with millions of refugees from the collapsed Russian state.

The protagonist of the first part of the novel is Andrey Menyaev, once a bestselling writer with two film adaptations and a leader of the state propaganda factory in Moscow. Today Menyaev is a refugee, seeking a residency permit in Scandinavia. Ironically, a leading figure of Moscow media beau monde, cynical and smart, today Menyaev fully depends on those he has always despised and mocked — good-hearted idealists. He is being introduced to an Icelandic lady, an activist of feministic movement and a liberal intellectual, and a member of a covert organization helping refugees with the immigration procedures. Will Harpa, his “beautiful Icelander”, as Menyaev calls her, succeed in defending their marriage in the eyes of the experienced migration officials?

The main character of the second part is Danya Svechin. A talented digital artist, he created deepfakes under Menyaev’s supervision in Moscow. To his luck, Svechin has got an Estonian citizenship, and after the revolt in Moscow he settles down in a low-key area in Estonia, far from the Russian refugees ghetto. It is there where alerting news reach Svechin: former fellow workers from the Moscow propaganda factory are reported dead, brutally murdered by a single terrorist or a terrorist group. Svechin receives protection from

authorities in a new hide-away under a fake name. The only connection with his past is Nika, a childhood friend, a single mother who writes to him about their life in the refugees ghetto. Once Nika tells the artist about a group of illegal migrants fighting back a local gang that kept nagging the family with a handicapped kid, though they knew that might compromise their status in Estonia. The police detained the gangsters yet deported the Russians back to their home country. Nika’s story inspires Svechin to draw a comic book that becomes an international sensation. Svechin decides to finally meet Nika in person and falls victim to the mysterious terrorist avenger.

Mira Iskalieva from the last part of the novel is one of this group of deported refugees, a heroine from Svechin’s comic book. We follow her story after the deportation to Moscow, where she becomes a sex slave for local gunmen. Mira manages to escape. With a group of teenagers, she makes another desperate attempt to cross the border of Russia.

Darkly humorous and frighteningly true to life, Zarubin’s novel is more than a social satire or a warning. Zarubin smartly manipulates his readers in translating the novel’s events to the up-to-date news in politics and social life. Zarubin shocks with his prophetic insights and his bright and broad picture of Russian-European relations.

Shortlisted for the **New Horizons Award 2023**



Elena Shubina publishing (AST)

Novel, 2023

512 pp

Audio rights sold

Litbuk

New Science Fiction From L.

A captivating literary odyssey, *New Science Fiction from L.* unveils nothing short of a universe: a world where magic happens, a world we live in, a world that might have a future.

Helsinki, July 2020. A scientist who left Russia fleeing trumped-up treason charges is found dead outside his apartment. The task of sorting through the books from his home library falls to Darja, a local student helping out at a second-hand bookshop. In a huge atlas of Arctica, she finds notes of a mysterious investigation that the deceased carried out. The scientist searched for people to interview them from the former Soviet Union, today scattered all over the world, from Kazakhstan and Georgia, Finland and Italy, to Canada. In the recorded interviews, the subjects are asked to recall an anthology of sci-fi short stories. These stories seem to be written by authors of various origin — Latvia, Lviv (Ukraine), Leningrad etc — translated into Russian or published in original languages. Despite the key differences as of original language, publishers, titles of the stories and names of the writers, the plots and subjects of the stories in the collection were nearly identical. What's more, every reader accounts of their reading experience as nothing less but miraculous and life changing.

Now Darja is set to continue the dead scientist's investigation, and she starts with identifying NSFL readers' club, whose members, it turns, hired him in the first place. This decision sets off a breathtaking chain of events that will turn upside down Darja's dreamy pandemic summer and might change the future of our civilization.

New Science Fiction from L. is a gripping literary quest set on the eve of a new European war and in the twilight years of the Soviet empire. It speaks in many voices and takes the reader many places: from Kyiv and Tbilisi in the 1980s to the Riga, Bologna and St. Petersburg of the 2010s. Both a compassionate tale of self-discovery and an unflinching reckoning with toxic nostalgia, *New Science Fiction from L.* is a glimpse of what Russophone literature can be when it stops navel-gazing and engages with the world beyond Russian imperial myths.