



About the author:

YANA VAGNER was born in Moscow in 1973 into a bilingual family. Her Czech mother had come to Moscow in the 1960s to study Russian language and literature. Yana graduated from Moscow State University with a degree in management and has worked as an interpreter, a radio anchor, and a logistics manager, a career that allowed her to travel extensively throughout Africa, Europe, and Latin America.

She began writing *To the Lake* as a weekly blog while a flu epidemic swept through Moscow. It later became a bestselling novel, translated into multiple languages and adapted into a Netflix series, followed by its sequel, *Truly Human*, and the stand-alone novels *Accomplices* and *The Tunnel*. Both *Accomplices* and *The Tunnel* are currently in development for film adaptations.

Selected Bibliography

2024 – **The Tunnel**, *novel*

2020 – **2068**, *novel*

2017 – **Accomplices**, *novel*

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

2011 – **Vongozero**, *novel*

Awards

Finalist of the **Big Book Award** 2024

Finalist of the **Big Book Award** in the Audio Book nomination 2025

Laureate of the **Big Book Award** Reader's Choice (2nd prize) 2024

Reading 3.0 Award in the Most Anticipated Film Adaptation 2024

Financial Times Book of the Year 2021 (UK)

Herald Book of the Year 2021 (UK)

Longlisted for the **Big Book Award** 2017

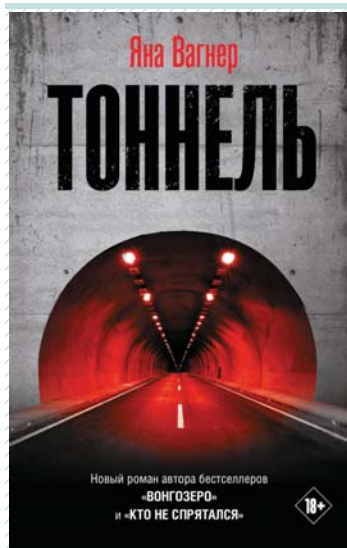
Shortlisted for **Prix Russophonie** 2015

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

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

Longlisted for the **New Literature Prize** 2012

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

Winner of the **Big Book Award** Reader's Choice (2nd prize) 2024Finalist of the **Big Book Award** in the Audio Book 2025Selected for the **Booksellers prize of La Bête noir** 2025, France

The Tunnel

Nearly **50 000** copies soldOver **100 000** e-book downloadsOver **120 000** audio downloads

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.

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 produce, 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 to strike up conversations. Impatience eventually gets the better of some, and a small group ventures toward the tunnel's exit, embarking on a trek of several kilometers. 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, with 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 protocol to select survivors.

Following the massive electrical failure, the trapped individuals, confined underground 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, the survivors feel as though they've spent an eternity underground. They have miraculously escaped what can only be described as hell. However, for some, salvation never arrived.

Elena Shunina Publishing (AST)

Novel, 2024

569pp

147000 words

Translation rights

French Robert Laffont

Bulgarian Labirint

Audio rights

Vimbo

Film rights sold

Complete French
translation available

Most anticipated film
adaptation

Selected quotes

A kind of extremely distressing dystopia.

Hélène Fischbach,

director of the international festival Quai du Polar

Yana Vagner's novel *Tunnel* tells the story of drivers and passengers unexpectedly trapped in an enclosed space beneath a river. This situation, more suited to

a thriller or a survival guide, serves the author to raise philosophical questions about the nature of power, social order, and human civilization. kind of extremely distressing dystopia.

Gorky.media

Nominated for the **National Bestseller Award 2018**Longlisted for the **Big Book Award 2017****Elena Shubina Publishing (AST)**

Novel, 2017

542 pp

Translation rights

French Mirobole Editions

French Poche

Czech Omega/Dobrovsky/ now available

Lithuanian Alma Littera

*Film rights sold*Complete French
translation availableFilm adaptation in
development

Accomplices

Nearly 70 000 copies
sold

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 at a mountain skiing resort for a film shoot. The film producer rents a secluded hotel on the mountaintop 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 her to die under the onset of an icy 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 is 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 — now 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 and prodigious actress, ruthlessly exploited and manipulated her friends, feeding on their love and despairs.

The friends must discover unpleasant truths about each other, confront the dark secrets of their own pasts, and break through the ice shell of their lifelong illusions.

The first suspicion falls on Tatiana, the scriptwriter. Tatiana, the author of one novel heralded by critics as a "bright promising debut," could not replicate her first breakthrough and had to switch to writing scripts. Her bitter, austere, and even aggressive personality clashes with her husband's conforming and benign nature. The secret glue of their marriage is Tatiana's infertility — a sad side effect of an abortion she had in the early years of their young marriage, prompted by her husband. Tatiana silently blames her husband for her failure as a mother, while Petya's feelings of guilt keep 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 her to the rest of the group. She herself was a victim of family abuse as a child. Today, Masha is a charity activist, providing help for sick children from all over Russia. She 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 on countless cheap soap operas. For years he has desperately tried to finance his own feature film, but without success. For this failure, he blames Sonya, a celebrity who could help through her connections but prefers 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 elitist group of Moscovites. For Laura, Ivan's young wife, this social difference is of no importance. With the looks of a fashion model and the same provincial childhood, Laura seems no more than a shallow hunter for Ivan's fortune. However, she 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 her adored husband.

Last but not least, there is Egor, a successful lawyer who cheats on his wife Liza. A housewife incarnate, Liza replaced love for her husband with dedication to their home — a dream house she so beautifully and passionately manages. Liza knows of her husband's infidelity; it 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 alternates between investigators, testifiers, and even judges — but essentially remains 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. Sonya's murder becomes the conviction binding them all.

In this flawlessly written drama, Vagner masterfully melds mystery-suspense, close character study, intense emotions, and social background. Vagner's recognizable "avalanche prose" style works brilliantly in this complex drama, making for an intense and true page-turning read.

Over **60 000** copies sold

Eksmo
2011
Elena Shubina Publishing (AST)
Novel, 2020
448 pp

Translation rights

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

Audio rights
Vimbo

Film rights sold

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

Financial Times Book of the Year 2021**Herald Book of the Year 2021**Shortlisted for **Prix Russophonie** 2015Shortlisted for **Prix Bob Morane** 2015Finalist of the **Grand Prix des lectrices Elle** 2015Longlisted for the **New Literature Prize** 2012Nominated for the **National Bestseller Prize** 2012

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 is 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. 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 Vongozero Lake near the Finnish border, where Sergei had stayed a few times on hunting trips. Born of necessity, the expedition grows to 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 north across a rapidly deteriorating country.

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

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

The sweeping avalanche of a road story stops at its destination: 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 a new routine, a new code, a new life, and possibly new selves from the ruins and rubble.

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 poses the simplest and at the same time the most complicated question to her characters and readers: what does it take to remain human in the face of mortal danger?

Complete
English & French
translations
available

Bestselling Netflix series