



Stork Mountain: A Novel

By Miroslav Penkov

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In *Stork Mountain*, a young Bulgarian immigrant returns to the country of his birth in search of his grandfather, who suddenly and unexpectedly cut all contact with the family three years ago. The trail leads him to a village on the border with Turkey, a stone's throw away from Greece, high up in the Strandja Mountains – a place of pagan mysteries and black storks nesting in giant oaks; a place where every spring, possessed by Christian saints, men and women dance barefoot across live coals in search of rebirth. Here in the mountains, he gets drawn by his grandfather into a maze of half-truths. And here, he falls in love with an unobtainable Muslim girl. Old ghosts come back to life and forgotten conflicts blaze anew until the past surrenders its shameful secrets.

Stork Mountain is an enormously charming, slyly brilliant debut novel from an internationally celebrated writer. It is a novel that will undoubtedly find a home in many readers' hearts.

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Editorial Review

Review

"[A] searing, heartfelt novel. This book is rich, enmeshing the personal with the political and historical, told in strange and vertiginous language that seems fitting for a tale of such passion." -- **Publishers Weekly (starred review)**.

"[A] sprawling, wildly ambitious novel... thoughtful and thought-provoking, with a passionate faith in the redemptive powers of art." -- **Wendy Smith, The Boston Globe**.

"[W]hat the Great Bulgarian Novel could be if it could be rendered in English... *Stork Mountain* takes wing to the heights." -- **Steven G. Kellman, The Dallas Morning News**.

"*Stork Mountain* is a beautiful and haunting novel, one that delves into a painful past and begs the questions: To what extent are we doomed to relive the past and carry it with us? At what point must we relent and set it free?" -- **Hilary Rice, Chicago Review of Books**.

"It is hard to believe Miroslav Penkov is younger than I am, born in 1982, when the experience of reading him is akin to reading the authors of Western classics... [*Stork Mountain*] is a gorgeous, ambitious, sprawling, multi-dimensional baroque tale of going back to one's ancestral home--in this case a Bulgarian-American man looking for his grandfather, who has gone missing. The political and the mystical, the historical and the spiritual, all intertwine in unexpected ways, as coming-of-age meets love story in this stunning debut." -- **Porochista Khakpour, The Barnes and Noble Review**.

"An intelligently mapped plot complements the skilful blend of familial relationships with religious commentary, and elements of the hamlets' folklore and rituals lend an added mystery; the story brims but doesn't feel crowded... This is a historically rich study of borders: those imposed by cartography and those that are self-constructed." -- **Zoe Apostolides, The Financial Times**.

"*Stork Mountain* is a timely novel when Europe--its entangled past and its uncertain future--occupies the headlines; it is a timeless tale too about the undying and undead, about dreams not paled by reality, and above all, about a young man's search for an answer by searching for the right question. What a tremendous achievement from one of the best young international writers." -- **Yiyun Li, author of *Kinder Than Solitude and Gold Boy, Emerald Girl***.

"A Bulgarian Don Quixote fighting windmills, his Sancho Panza a lost American grandson, and Dulcinea a Turk overfond of smoking dope. Add a smattering of Christian firewalkers, a touch of Muslim clerics, thousands of hysterical storks who deliver more secrets than babies. What you get is a marvel of a novel. Penkov has written a rollicking, poignant delight." -- **Rabih Alameddine, National Book Award Finalist and author of *An Unnecessary Woman***.

"I can't speak to Miroslav Penkov's standing among Bulgarian novelists, but now that I've read *Stork Mountain*, it is easy to say that Penkov is my favorite novelist publishing in America." -- **Kyle Minor, author of *Praying Drunk***.

"Miroslav Penkov writes with warmth, wit and emotional precision, and *Stork Mountain* is a gorgeous and big-hearted novel that manages to be both a page-turning adventure story and a nuanced meditation on the

meaning of home. This is a fantastic book." -- **Molly Antopol, author of *The UnAmericans***.

From the Inside Flap

Stork Mountain tells the story of a young Bulgarian immigrant who, in an attempt to escape his mediocre life in America, returns to the country of his birth. Retracing the steps of his estranged grandfather, a man who suddenly and inexplicably cut all contact with the family three years prior, the boy finds himself on the border of Bulgaria and Turkey, a stone's throw away from Greece, high up in the Strandja Mountains. It is a place of pagan mysteries and black storks nesting in giant oaks; a place where every spring, possessed by Christian saints, men and women dance barefoot across live coals in search of rebirth. Here in the mountains, the boy reunites with his grandfather. Here in the mountains, he falls in love with an unobtainable Muslim girl. Old ghosts come back to life and forgotten conflicts, in the name of faith and doctrine, blaze anew.

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About the Author

Miroslav Penkov was born in 1982 in Bulgaria. He moved to America in 2001 and received an MFA in creative writing at the University of Arkansas. His stories have won the BBC International Short Story Award 2012 and *The Southern Review's* Eudora Welty Prize and have appeared in *A Public Space*, *Granta*, *One Story*, *The Best American Short Stories 2008*, *The PEN / O. Henry Prize Stories 2012*, and *The Best American Nonrequired Reading 2013*. Published in over a dozen countries, *East of the West* was a finalist for the 2012 William Saroyan International Prize for Writing and the Steven Turner Award for First Fiction by the Texas Institute of Letters. In 2014-15 he was the literature protégé in the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative, working with mentor Michael Ondaatje. Penkov teaches creative writing at the University of North Texas, where he is editor-in-chief of the *American Literary Review*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Randall Yang:

Now a day folks who Living in the era wherever everything reachable by talk with the internet and the resources inside can be true or not require people to be aware of each facts they get. How individuals to be smart in receiving any information nowadays? Of course the correct answer is reading a book. Reading through a book can help individuals out of this uncertainty Information especially this *Stork Mountain: A Novel* book as this book offers you rich facts and knowledge. Of course the details in this book hundred per cent guarantees there is no doubt in it you probably know this.

Diana Elliott:

The e-book untitled *Stork Mountain: A Novel* is the guide that recommended to you to see. You can see the quality of the publication content that will be shown to a person. The language that creator use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The article author was did a lot of research when write the book, therefore the information that they share to you is absolutely accurate. You also can get the e-book of *Stork Mountain: A Novel* from the publisher to make you more enjoy free time.

Marsha Gleason:

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