

# Happiness

*Yuri Felsen*

trans. *Bryan Karetnyk*

Winner of an English PEN Award

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**Author bio:**

*Yuri Felsen*, pseudonym of Nikolai Freudenstein, was born in St Petersburg in 1894. He emigrated and settled in Paris in 1923 where he became one of the leading writers of his generation. Known by his contemporaries as 'the Russian Proust', Felsen died in the gas chambers at Auschwitz, his life and legacy destroyed by the Nazis.

*Bryan Karetnyk* is a British writer and translator. His recent translations include major works by Gaito Gazdanov, Irina Odoevtseva and Boris Poplavsky. He is also the editor of the landmark Penguin Classics anthology *Russian Émigré Short Stories from Bunin to Yanovsky*.

# Happiness

Yuri Felsen, translated by Bryan Karetnyk

**A haunting portrait of love, obsession and exile, *Happiness* captures the emotional and psychological tensions of interwar Paris.**

- The second novel in Yuri Felsen's 'The Recurrence of Things Past' project, written in stream-of-consciousness diary form
- Explores the unraveling of a complex relationship through jealousy, longing and the painful pursuit of happiness
- Offers a vivid glimpse into émigré life and shifting sexual politics, with psychological depth that feels strikingly modern

## About the book

*Happiness* is the second part of Yuri Felsen's *The Recurrence of Things Past* trilogy, following the critically acclaimed *Deceit*. Both subtle and profound in its exploration of love, art, literature, and human frailty, Felsen's trilogy traces the tormented romance of its protagonist alongside his artistic evolution, standing at the forefront of aesthetic and philosophical currents in European modernism.

## Reviews

'This is real literature, pure and honest' – **Vladimir Nabokov**

'Felsen has rightly been compared to Proust in his determination to make language capture every atom of the mind's working.' – *Literary Review*

'Felsen's name deserves to be conjured with, just as it was before Paris fell.' – *The Sunday Telegraph*

'Yuri Felsen's *Deceit* offers the reader that rarest of gifts: a glimpse into consciousness as it was constructed nearly a hundred years ago; a portrait not only of how one Russian émigré lived in Paris in the first half of the Twentieth Century but of what and how he thought. This is an improbably modern novel in which, to my own surprise, I seemed, again and again, to encounter and recognize myself.' – **Miranda Popkey**, author of *Topics of Conversation*

'As astute as it is disturbed, as callow as it is wise, and as brilliant as it is idiosyncratic, *Deceit* reads like the twisted love child of Proust and Dostoevsky, but with a genius all its own.' – Antoine Wilson, author of *Mouth to Mouth* and *Panorama City*



Yuri Felsen  
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Deceit

Yuri Felsen et al.

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