



The Worlds We Think We Know

Dalia Rosenfeld

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Dalia Rosenfeld's *The Worlds We Think We Know* evinces a writer with a wide range of skills. Some stories are funny, others deeply sad; all indicate a gift for language and for turning everyday occurrences into memorable slices of life. These literary stories stay in the realm of realism, focusing on well-drawn characters and their rich internal lives.

The title story is one of the collection's best offerings, making use of the author's current home of Israel for a beautifully rendered look at different generations, centered around the narrator's attempts at interviewing a Holocaust survivor while she falls in love with his soldier son.

Rosenfeld's knack for detail comes through, whether via an old man's habit of eating onions in a specific manner, or through characters questioning the aesthetic appeal of the city's plant-irrigation system. As in the book's other stories, there is real humor in the dialogue and a well-observed sense for how people talk.

The Worlds We Think We Know has plenty of variety in its subject matter. "Liliana, Years Later" finds its narrator reflecting on her former piano teacher, and how her introduction to the music of Chopin influenced other parts of her life. "Invasions" finds its protagonist torn between feelings for two men—the steady doctor who already loves her, and the stranger she bonds with over reading material on public transit. "Two Passions for Two People" involves a man who loves to draw birds and a woman dead set on releasing the birds from the city zoo.

This collection makes strong use of different narrators and points of view, as well as its settings around the United States, Europe, and Israel. The dialogue is uniformly excellent, and the prose feels appropriately distinct in each story while retaining the author's voice.

JEFF FLEISCHER (May/June 2017)

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