



Le troisième mensonge

Ágota Kristóf

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De l'autre côté de la frontière, la guerre est finie, la dictature est tombée. Pour vivre, pour survivre, il a fallu mentir pendant toutes ces années. Klaus et Claus T. découvrent à leurs dépens que la liberté retrouvée n'est pas synonyme de vérité. Et si leur existence était en elle-même un mensonge ? Ainsi s'achève la trilogie inaugurée avec *Le Grand Cahier*, et traduite aujourd'hui dans une vingtaine de pays.

Le troisième mensonge Details

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Author : Ágota Kristóf

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Fionnuala says

People have been telling stories for so long now that it is a challenge for writers to come up with a new way of spinning a tale. They are forced to bend over backwards and twist themselves into impossible contortions in order to vary the telling while we, the spoiled readers, get to sit back and judge, sometimes harshly, the amazing feats of prestidigitation they conjure up for our entertainment

Kristof has quite an array of magic tricks up her capacious sleeves. I imagine her as one of those magicians who place a member of the audience inside a box, pronounce some magic formula, and hey presto! when the box is opened, the person has disappeared into thin air. Or hide something under a beaker only for it to appear under a different beaker without anyone noticing how the exchange came about. Or make an object, a blue cube for example, disappear momentarily only to reappear as a yellow cone. Or turn a single turtle dove into an entire flock.

Yes, there's definitely some sleight of hand involved in Kristof's puzzle in three books: *Le grand cahier*, *La preuve*, *Le troisième mensonge*.

At the beginning, there are two boys.

Poof! One disappears.

So there is only one boy left.

Poof! He too disappears but poof! the other, or is it the same one, reappears in the same place.

Then poof! the two appear in a new location but they have changed colour and shape..

And their stories increase and multiply like the magician's flock of doves.

No wonder the title of this third book in the series is *The Third Lie*.

However, there is more to this than magic tricks.

Private family drama is pitted against trauma on a national scale.

Adultery is given as the cause of the private drama, war and annexation the cause of the national one. Either way, two boys suffer, they are taken from their parents and one from the other, split like Germany into East and West.

While the story mostly takes place in Hungary near the Austrian border, it is clearly an allegory for the whole of eastern Europe and for the incomprehensions that continue to divide people even after the wall came down. We are reminded of the people who returned eventually to find others living in their homes, living their very lives.

Nothing can remain intact in a war zone. Only fragments remain afterwards and truth is invariably one of the missing pieces.

Ava says

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