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Broccoli and Other Tales of Food and Love by Lara Vapnyar

[Broccoli and Other Tales of Food and Love](#) Written by [Lara Vapnyar](#) Trade Paperback, 160 pages | Anchor | Fiction - Literary; Fiction - Short Stories (single author) | **\$14.00** | 978-0-307-27988-0 (0-307-27988-X)

Each of Lara Vapnyar's six stories invites us into a world where food and love intersect, along with the overlapping pleasures and frustrations of Vapnyar's uniquely captivating characters. Meet Nina, a recent arrival from Russia, for whom colorful vegetables represent her own fresh hopes and dreams . . . Luda and Milena, who battle over a widower in their English class with competing recipes for cheese puffs, spinach pies, and meatballs . . . and Sergey, who finds more comfort in the borscht made by a paid female companion than in her sexual ministrations. They all crave the taste and smell of home, wherever-and with whomever-that may turn out to be.

A roundup of recipes are the final taste of this delicious collection.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307279880>

Broccoli and Other Tales of Food and Love by Lara Vapnyar

[Broccoli and Other Tales of Food and Love](#) Written by [Lara Vapnyar](#) eBook, 208 pages | Anchor | Fiction - Literary; Fiction - Short Stories (single author) | **\$14.00** | 978-0-307-37761-6 (0-307-37761-X)

In a triumphant return to the short story, the form in which she made her extraordinary debut with *There Are Jews in My House*, Lara Vapnyar gives us a delightful new collection in which food and love intersect, along with their overlapping pleasures, frustrations, and deep associations in the lives of her unforgettable characters.

From "Broccoli" to "Borscht" to "Puffed Rice and Meatballs," each of these new stories invites us into the uniquely captivating private worlds of Vapnyar's Eastern European émigrés. There's Nina, a recent arrival from Russia, for whom the colorful abundance of the vegetable markets in New York represents her own fresh hopes and dreams. . . Luda and Milena, who battle over a widower in their English class with competing recipes for cheese puffs, spinach pies, and meatballs . . . Sergey, who finds more comfort in the borscht made by a paid female companion than in her sexual ministrations. Each of the women and men who inhabit these witty, tender, and beautifully observed stories needs and longs for the taste and smell of home, wherever--and with whomever--that may turn out to be.

Russian in its wit and in many of its rich details, but American in its insistence on the quest for personal happiness, however provisional and however high the cost, *Broccoli and Other Tales of Food and Love* masterfully illuminates a very particular facet of desire with entirely charming results.

From the Hardcover edition.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307377616>

Memoirs of a Muse by Lara Vapnyar

[Memoirs of a Muse](#) Written by [Lara Vapnyar](#) **Book**, 224 pages | Vintage | Fiction - Literary | **\$13.95** | 978-0-307-42685-7 (0-307-42685-8)

Lara Vapnyar, author of the prizewinning story collection *There Are Jews in My House*, brings us a poignant and comic first novel about a delightfully sincere modern-day muse. We meet Tanya as a typical Russian girl, living with her bookish professor mother in a drab Soviet apartment. As a teenager, Tanya becomes obsessed with Dostoevsky and settles on her life's calling: she will be the companion to a great writer. Her memoirs tell of her immigration to New York after college, the stifling expectations of her Brighton Beach cousins, and the crucial moment in a bookshop on the Upper West Side, where Tanya attends a reading by Mark Schneider, a Significant New York Novelist.

Tanya soon moves in with Mark, ready to dazzle in bed, to serve and inspire . . . if only he would spend a little more time writing and a little less time at the gym, the shrink, and the literary soirees where she feels hopelessly unglamorous and out of place. But as she gradually learns to read English-struggling to better understand Mark's work and her true role as Muse-Tanya also learns more than she expected about the destiny she has imagined for herself.

Animated by Vapnyar's beguiling grace and vividness-with a narrative richness reflecting the great tradition of Russian realism to which she is a natural heir-Memoirs of a Muse is an altogether wonderful novel. It is a lively meditation on female capabilities and happiness, on the mysteries of artistic inspiration (and the absurdities of artistic life), and, perhaps most movingly, on the pain and wonder of the immigrant experience in New York City.

From the Hardcover edition.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307426857>

There Are Jews in My House by Lara Vapnyar

[There Are Jews in My House](#) Written by [Lara Vapnyar](#) **Book**, 160 pages | Anchor | Fiction - Short Stories (single author) | **\$12.00** | 978-0-307-42969-8 (0-307-42969-5)

Innocence rounds the bend to experience in these beautifully shaped stories of Moscow and Brooklyn, which take up the worldview of the young and overlooked. The stunning Second World War story that opens the book is a masterpiece of ambivalence-about the simultaneous generosity and hypocrisy of Galina, a gentile Russian woman who offers safe harbor to a Jewish friend and her daughter during the German occupation. In "Love Lessons-Mondays, 9 A.M.," a young math teacher is assigned to teach a girls' sex education class, even though she herself is still awaiting her first kiss. And in "Mistress," a boy newly arrived in this country bears witness to the intimate details of his grandparents' new and diverging lives: his grandmother's doctors' appointments, where he is charged with translating her myriad complaints into English, and his grandfather's clandestine courtship of another woman.

Adept at both snapshots and long exposures, Lara Vapnyar, herself a recent immigrant, writes of life's adventures and possibilities, its disappointments and unexpected turns, with delicate humor, brilliant timing, and striking emotional honesty. She is a writer to relish and to watch.

From the Hardcover edition.

Memoirs of a Muse by Lara Vapnyar

[Memoirs of a Muse](#) Written by [Lara Vapnyar](#) Trade Paperback, 224 pages | Vintage | Fiction - Literary | **\$13.95** | 978-1-4000-7700-7 (1-4000-7700-1)

Tanya is a typical teenager living with her bookish professor mother in a cramped Soviet apartment. She is obsessed with Dostoyevksy, and noticing that he always portrays his mistress and muse in his novels-never his wife-she determines to become a companion to a great writer. Her opportunity comes when, as a college graduate newly emigrated to America, she attends a Manhattan bookstore reading by Mark Schneider, a Significant New York Novelist. Tanya quickly moves in with Mark, ready to dazzle in bed, to serve and inspire . . . if only he would spend a little more time writing. But as she struggles to better understand her role as Muse, Tanya also learns more than she expected about the destiny she has imagined for herself.

A touching and very funny novel in the great tradition of Russian realism, *Memoirs of a Muse* is also a lively meditation on the mysteries and absurdities of artistic inspiration.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9781400077007>

There Are Jews in My House by Lara Vapnyar

[There Are Jews in My House](#) Written by [Lara Vapnyar](#) Trade Paperback, 160 pages | Anchor | Fiction - Short Stories (single author) | **\$12.00** | 978-1-4000-3389-8 (1-4000-3389-6)

There Are Jews in My House is one of the most striking debuts of recent years. Tracing the lives and aspirations of Russians living in Moscow and Brooklyn, these poignant, sad and funny stories create a luminous new literary world.

In the title story, set during the Second World War, Galina, a gentile, offers refuge to a Jewish friend and her daughter, only to find herself increasingly resentful of their presence in her home. In "Mistress," a nine-year-old boy, new to America, escorts his grandmother to her weekly doctors' appointments to interpret her myriad complaints. At the same time, he becomes aware that his grandfather may be involved with another woman. And in "Love Lessons-Mondays, 9 A.M." a young math teacher assigned to teach a sex education class becomes all too aware that her students are more experienced than she is.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9781400033898>
