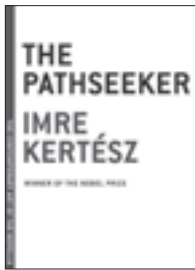


Moscow Rules is number eleven in Silva's exciting Gabriel Allon Israeli espionage series.

Here we find our hero trying to outwit Russian illegal arms dealer Ivan Kharkov, an ex KGB colonel whose shady transactions threaten to endanger the Western world. This proves to be very tricky since the Russians are notorious experts at spy craft. We get to peek at the lifestyle of the newly rich Russian upper crust, with their foreign villas and fancy cars. Allon is now married to the beautiful Italian Mossad agent Chiara and there is some awkward dialogue between them, while the banter between Allon and his loyal team of Israeli cohorts is great. Allon is continually pressured by his longtime boss, the near-mythical Ari Shamron, and he's still shying away from the inevitable promotion to take Shamron's place in the organization. The description of Allon's passionate work as an art restorer is fascinating. I found this book to be slightly less meaty than the previous ten but still a wonderful, gripping read. Mr. Silva, bring on number twelve! **MBA**



THE PATHSEEKER

Imre Kertész; Tim Wilkinson, trans.
Melville House Publishing, 2008. 129 pp. \$13.00 (pbk.)
ISBN: 978-1-933633-53-4 (pbk.)

Imre Kertész, awarded the 2002 Nobel Prize for Literature, is best known for works which draw from his experiences as a teenager in Nazi concentration camps. *The Pathseeker*, published in Hungarian in 1977 and newly translated into English, is another semi-autobiographical return to events during the Holocaust.

The Pathseeker, a man we learn little about, embarks on a journey that is both mysterious and haunting. In the limited space of this novella details are spare and vague. If we read very carefully, with a tuned ear and sharp senses, we realize we have travelled to the site of a former German concentration camp, amidst a town populated with people who deny its history. If the clues pass us by, we are nevertheless involved with the man every step of the way, watching as he begins to unlock secrets buried in his deepest memory.

An excellent afterward by the translator highlights the classic literary touchstones the

author wrote in to place the story in its exact time, location, and political context. There is much to consider in this slim, but powerful tale. Afterward. **PGM**



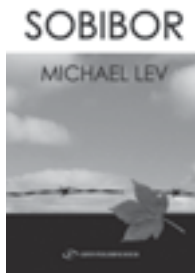
SO LONG AT THE FAIR

Christina Schwarz
Doubleday, 2008. 244 pp. \$24.95
ISBN: 978-0-385-51029-5

Every character in Christina Schwarz's newest novel, *So Long at the Fair*, is in a dysfunctional relationship, and there are many characters and many relationships. Yes, each struggles to find true love and personal fulfillment, but these self-indulgent egotists manage to look in all the wrong places and at all the wrong people. Their search results in a novel that is replete with love triangles and unrequited feelings.

Beneath the superficiality of these affairs, however, are oddly philosophical ideas that appear to motivate, or perhaps explain, the actions of the characters. One character, for instance, identifies himself as a person who cares more about how things function than about how they look. Another wonders whether it is more important to be happy than to be good. Still another character responds by claiming that some people believe "being happy is the ultimate good." Unfortunately, no one in this novel is happy. Whether any are good is a matter of opinion.

Those looking for a light novel with a few twists, lots of small-town attitudes, and plenty of natural Wisconsin imagery will find this novel enjoyable and a quick read. **MDE**



SOBIBOR

Michael Lev; Barnett Zumoff, trans.
Gefen Publishing House, 2007. 278 pp. \$19.95
ISBN: 978-965-2294-08

This novel is a somber, somewhat ghostly retelling of the people and events in the Sobibor death camp. Categorized by the author as "a vivid testament of remembrance," it is not for the casual reader; it is a raw story best suited for the serious student. The unremitting horrors as revealed through the memories, thoughts, and nightmares of the survivors are shattering. The critical nature of friendship as a life preserver is shown clearly through the interrelationships of the various people who live in the camp.

We follow Berek, the conduit for the testimony, from the Polish *shtetl* of his childhood to his experiences during the Holocaust—the most horrific of which occurred during his incarceration in Sobibor. We learn, in great detail, about his participation in the uprising

...A somber, ghostly testament of remembrance [of] the unremitting horrors of the Sobibor death camp

and his eventual escape from the camp. Of particular interest is information on the leader of the uprising, Alexander Pechersky, including the planning, problem solving, and coordination that was involved in executing a successful escape. Yet it is the relentless efforts of Berek and other Nazi hunters through which we participate, albeit vicariously, in the trials of two of the most vicious administrators of Sobibor. We are awed at the hunters' determination to locate and bring these war criminals to justice for their unspeakable acts.

If you choose to read this book, do so with the expectation that it will engender a range of emotions—anger, distress, disbelief—which, it is to say, pale in comparison to what Berek and his fellow prisoners experienced at the hands of the Nazis in the Sobibor camp. Epilogue and introductory essay. **NDK**



TALES OF THE TEN LOST TRIBES

Tamar Yellin
The Toby Press, 2008. 156 pp. \$22.95
ISBN: 978-1-59264-213-7

This slim volume by award winning author Tamar Yellin comprises ten sto-