



Why Love?: A Punch-Drunk Proustian Odyssey

Robert Koppel

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Bold, Profound, Funny

“I’m alive in the Nighthawks, above a coral reef of truth and lies, the recipient of far too many short Joe Louis’s and a series of long loopers to the body and chin. A bit of illuminated ceiling brightens the interior. Outside, dull hues predominate. Inside, triangular countertop, yellow door, anonymous figures in boxy suits. The only hint of life and color, a soda jerk in white uniform, and the red blouse of a customer. Reconstructed from memory, wrestling with allusion, searching for the meaning of love, I lock on the light and all that it touches.”

So begins WHY LOVE?, the story of Ira Fleckenstein and his crazy family. Inspired by Greek mythology, Yiddish theater, the God particle, and the songs of Burt Bacharach, our hero embarks on a punch-drunk Proustian odyssey. Aided by Borko Khortokofsky, a Nobel laureate; Papa Francesco, the Pope; Aunt Sonya, the Athena of Yevreyskaya; and the mysterious Stephen, Ira searches for the answer to the universal question, what's it all about, Alfie? The reflection of Wittgenstein is never far away. The novel is a love story and the writing of a love story, all rolled into one; full of false starts, dashed plans, deep feeling, wild humor, and triumph.

ROBERT KOPPEL is the critically acclaimed author of more than a dozen books translated into many languages. His previous novel, THE NEXT STEP, tells the story of a Wall Street titan who, losing everything, reinvents himself as a FedEx shipping clerk. In the process, he saves the world and achieves redemption.

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Theresa Adams:

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