



by Martin R. Dean

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Fiction

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False Quartet

Falsches Quartett

review

Lucas is a high school teacher who cares deeply about his pupils. He teaches literary analysis as a way of negotiating emotional and mental development, but he is unable to help Nadia, the one he cares about the most. After several breakdowns, she throws herself under a train. Alongside this is the story of Lucas's wife, Lisa. Happy in her work as a journalist, sad about the way their marriage has stalled, her sudden redundancy leaves her completely at a loss.

Lisa's hobby of photography seems to offer a new career path; but instead she uses it to explore faces (including Nadia's, whose fascination for Lucas she knows about, and Deniz's, a Turkish pupil suffering from sleeping sickness, who loves Nadia). This quartet of protagonists constantly meet, and the novel portrays the reactions of the remaining three after Nadia's death. Lucas needlessly blames himself and is professionally and emotionally shattered, which in turn throws Lisa into complete disarray. But who is really to blame?

Dean's novel about mental and emotional coming-of-age and the ways that education, literature and adults help and hinder that process is a sophisticated cross-generational book that gathers momentum impressively. The judgements and intentions of the main protagonists and the array of strong cameos give the book real depth, variety and tension as decisions trigger unchangeable consequences.

press quotes

'Martin R. Dean is one of the strongest voices in Swiss literature.' – *Frankfurter Neue Presse*

about the author

Martin R. Dean was born in 1955 in Menziken, Switzerland. He grew up as the son of a Swiss mother and a Trinidadian-born father. He studied German philology, ethnology, and philosophy. He currently lives as a writer, essayist, and journalist in Basel.

Previous works include:

Ein Koffer voller Wünsche (2011)

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