



In Strange Gardens and Other Stories

Peter Stamm

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With the precision of a surgeon, Peter Stamm cuts to the heart of the fragile and revealing moments of everyday life.

They are bankers, students, mothers, or retirees. They live in New York City or somewhere in Switzerland, they work in London or Riga, they cross paths in a Fado bar in Lisbon. They breathe the banal routine of daily life. It is to these ordinary people that Peter Stamm grants center stage in his latest collection of short stories. Henry, a cowherd turned stuntman, crisscrosses the country, dreaming of meeting a woman. Inger, the Dane, refuses her skimpy life and takes off for Italy. Regina, so lonely in her big house since her children left and her husband passed away, discovers the world anew thanks to the Australian friend of her granddaughter, who helps Regina envision her next voyage.

In these stories, Stamm's clean style expresses despair without flash, through softness and small gestures, with disarming retorts full of derision and infinite tenderness. There, where life hesitates, ready to tip over—with nothing yet played out—is where these people and their stories exist. For us, they all become exceptional. Praise for *Unformed Landscape*: "Sensitive and unnerving. . . . An uncommonly intimate work, one that will remind the reader of his or her own lived experience with a greater intensity than many of the books that are published right here at home." —*The New Republic Online*

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