



LACK OF LIGHT

BY NINO HARATISCHWILI

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Das mangelnde Licht

Novel. German.

Release: 25.2.2022

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**The new novel by the internationally bestselling author of
*The Eighth Life (For Brilka)***

***Lack Of Light* is the story of four outstanding women bound in absolute friendship during their adolescence in post-soviet Tbilisi during the 90ies, fighting for their right for a future and their right to love – and trying to save their friendship after the harrowing death of one of them.**

'Here we stand, the trio that got away, that made the leap into the present; we, the survivors, who try to go on living as proxies for all those to whom this was not granted, and who will remain young for all eternity in these photographs.'

As the end of the century approaches, the voices calling for independence are growing ever louder. In this period of great upheaval, which culminates in chaos for the young state of Georgia, Keto, Dina, Nene and Ira grow up alongside each other in an 'Italian courtyard' typical of Tbilisi's Sololaki neighbourhood. Their lives play out between damp walls, and on enchanted wooden balconies; their families' backgrounds and social status are as different as the four girls are from one another: Dina, hungry for freedom, fatherless, living with her unconventional mother; Ira, the clever outsider; Nene, the romantic, niece of the most powerful criminal in the city; and the sensitive, motherless Keto. The first love that can only blossom in secret, the violence that erupts with the country's new-found independence, the bloody street battles and civil wars, food rationing and power cuts – despite everything, the four women's friendship seems indestructible, until at last it is shattered by an unforgivable betrayal and another tragic death.

In 2019, they are reunited at a major retrospective of their late friend's photographs in Brussels. These pictures recount their story, which is simultaneously the story of their country. And so, this very intimate retrospective forces them to lift the veil drawn over their past. Suddenly, after all these years, a light is shone into the shadow world of their memories; something new is glimpsed, and forgiveness seems possible.

Lack of Light is the story of a lost land and a lost generation; of a revolution that devours its children; of a friendship that defies death; of phantom pain, a battle with oneself and the world, a struggle with fate. It is also a homage to Georgia, the city of Tbilisi, and its people: a declaration of love across the ages.

Nino Haratischwili, born in Tbilisi in 1983, is a multiple-award-winning novelist and dramatist and one of the most important authors of contemporary German literature. Her worldwide bestseller, the epic family saga *The Eighth Life (for Brilka)*, was translated into numerous languages and nominated for the International Booker Prize. Her novel, *The Cat and the General* was shortlisted for the German Book Prize in 2018. Nino Haratischwili lives in Berlin.

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