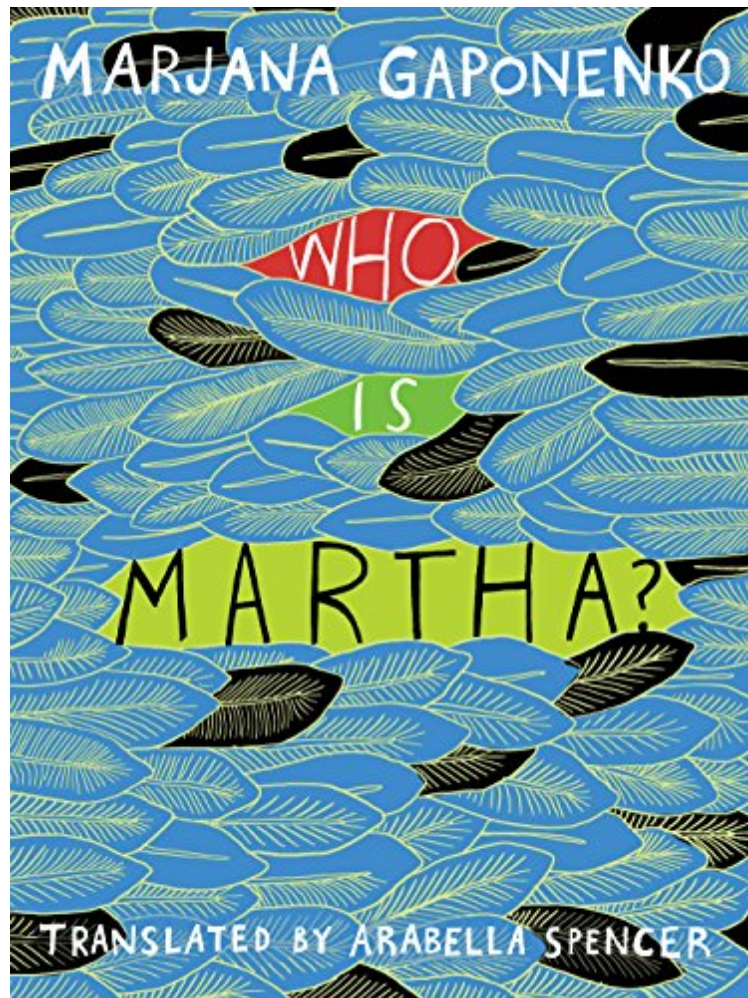


[E-BOOK] Who Is Martha?

## Who Is Martha?

Marjana Gaponenko

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#2410223 in Books 2014-10-07Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 7.90 x .60 x 5.20l, .0 #File Name: 1939931134217 pages | File size: 15.Mb

**Marjana Gaponenko : Who Is Martha?** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Who Is Martha?:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. "A Moving Story About a Spectacular Life"By TeresaWHO IS MARTHA? is a magical work of literature written by MARJANA GAPONENKO who will definitely be on my author to watch list from now on. I hope to hear more of her work. This audiobook was a fantastic treat for the ears and I'll listen to this one again for wonderful pearls of wisdom within its audio corridors. I feel honored as well as pleased to have had the opportunity to listen to this one. An audiobook not to be missed by contemporary fiction lovers as well as any book lover for its exceptional quality and importance. The way this story contrasted the life of one man with that of birds was fabulous.Levadski, an aged ornithologist learns he has lung cancer and spends some time weighing the gravity of his situation. He's 96 years old and reflects upon his life which has been rich and colorful then decides to

live out his final days at the Hotel Imperial in Vienna. He sees anthropomorphic characteristics between people and birds as the meaning of life begins to reveal its mysteries to him. While reflecting back on his life, he has flashes of clarity through the fog of his declining health. Things begin making sense to him and he begins having 'aha' moments. He becomes friends with Habib, the hotel butler who helps him with his baths as well as the concierge and another elderly gentleman he meets named Mr. Witzturn whom he also chats with. As I listened to this audiobook, I began to wonder if Levadski had maybe become slightly senile in his age and as his condition worsened perhaps he was hallucinating about being at the hotel in Vienna. Throughout his process of dying, he began to see the many truths of his lifetime and life overall. This book will make a person think. As for Martha, I feel that she influenced his entire life. I especially loved where he said that birds give up their entire souls to the world when they sing. It almost seemed like a metaphor of himself when I think about him making bird calls. Another place in the book I thought was interesting was when they were talking about different alcoholic beverages and likened them to some of life's quandaries and he said he wanted a spirit cocktail. This audiobook was a true gem. ALLAN ROBERTSON epitomized Luka Levadski. His narration was exceptionally amazing. He had perfect voice inflections and voice control. I thought his accents and bird calls were extremely good and he made this book an absolute joy to listen to. Congratulations on a job very well done. This was impressive work. This has become one of my favorite audiobooks thus far. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful to the Ear and Lyrical, Rich Writing By Diane C. Lasek This sweet audiobook was made all the better by the soothing voice of Narrator Allan Robertson, who reminded me of Burl Ives and was wonderful to the ear. Marjana Gaponenko has written a beautiful book about a 96 year old Ornithology Professor who at the end of his life, chooses to go out in style by living out his days in a penthouse suite in a luxury hotel in Vienna. In imaginative flashbacks, he re-lives his life through vivid memories of his boyhood and his Mother and her love of birds. In his present life in the hotel, he is cared for by a butler, bartenders, and a drinking companion as he continues to engage in a dreamlike fashion with the people and creatures around him. The ending will leave you wondering. . . . . 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Sublime By jkprint A fantastic book. The novel follows Levadski's last days at the Imperial Hotel -- a release from the usual expectations of an ending life and, especially pressing release for 96 year old Levadski given his diagnosis of imminent death. He abandons the reasonable clinically prolonged death in Ukraine for the slippery reality of living his last days in the Hotel Imperial. At times hilarious yet always equally poignant, his new relationships with his butler Habib and fellow Imperial guest Witzturn fill his final days and the face to face with the ultimate unknowable. The novel captures the humor of dining at the Imperial brilliantly, the subtle absurdity of the social world of the Muzikverein, the laughable frailty of the body, and (in the elevator) the comedy of etiquette in general. Levadski's memories of his life during the upheavals of the twentieth century place this last bird's life in a well-drawn context.

"Hilarious, beautiful and compassionate ... exquisitely rendered."—World Literature Today "A sweet, sad, sunny meditation on birds and music and the gentle approach of death."—John Rockwell, former New York Times arts critic and editor and founding director of Lincoln Center Festival "A deeply compassionate meditation on one man's life and its impending finality. Amusingly digressive and philosophically rich ... Gaponenko, at just thirty-four, remains a serious young talent and someone to keep an eye out for in the coming years."—Rain Taxi "A book like a fantastic party, as unshakeable as a child's faith. . . . Astonishes to the very end."—Neue Zürcher Zeitung "With layers of inventive language, vividly drawn characters, history, music, birds, love, loneliness, and wisdom, this is a brilliant book, rich and satisfying as a Viennese torte."—Sy Montgomery, author of *Birdology* "A celebration of creation and all its wonders, full of the joy of life."—Der Spiegel "A work of unbridled imagination. Marjana Gaponenko is exuberantly talented, and here she pulls out all the stops."—Die Welt "A panorama of twentieth century Central European history."—Citation for the 2013 Adelbert von Chamisso Prize In this rollicking novel, 96-year-old ornithologist Luka Levadski foregoes treatment for lung cancer and moves from Ukraine to Vienna to make a grand exit in a luxury suite at the Hotel Imperial. He reflects on his past while indulging in Viennese cakes and savoring music in a gilded concert hall. Levadski was born in 1914, the same year that Martha – the last of the now-extinct passenger pigeons – died. Levadski himself has an acute sense of being the last of a species. He may have devoted much of his existence to studying birds, but now he befriends a hotel butler and another elderly guest, who also doesn't have much time left, to share in the lively escapades of his final days. This gloriously written tale, in which Levadski feels "his heart pounding at the portals of his brain," mixes piquant wit with lofty musings about life, friendship, aging and death. Marjana Gaponenko was born in 1981 in Odessa, Ukraine. She fell in love with the German language as a young girl, and began writing in German when she was sixteen. She now lives in Vienna and Mainz.

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