Summer Lies: Stories (Vintage International)

Bernhard Schlink

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From Bernhard Schlink, the internationally best-selling author of *The Reader*, come seven provocative and masterfully calibrated stories. A keen dissection of the ways in which we play with truth and less-than-truth in our lives. *Summer Lies* brims with the delusions, the passions, the outbursts, and the sometimes irrational justifications people make within a mélange of beautifully rendered relationships. In "After the Season," a man falls quickly in love with a woman he meets on the beach but wrestles with his incongruous feelings of betrayal after he learns she's rich. In "Johann Sebastian Bach on Ruegen," a son tries to put his resentment toward his emotionally distant father behind him by proposing a trip to a Back festival but soon realizes, during his efforts to reconnect, that it wasn't his father who was the distant one. A philandering playwright is accused to infidelity by his wife in "The Night in Baden-Baden," but he sees her accusations as nothing more than a means to exculpate himself of his guilt as he carries on with his ways. And in "Stranger in the Night," an obliging professor becomes an accomplice—not entirely unwittingly—to the temporary escape of a charismatic fugitive on a delayed flight from New York to Frankfurt.

The truth, as once character puts it, is "passionate, beautiful sometimes, and sometimes hideous, it can make you happy and it can torture you, and it always sets you free." Tantalizingly, so is the act of telling a lie—to others and to ourselves.



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