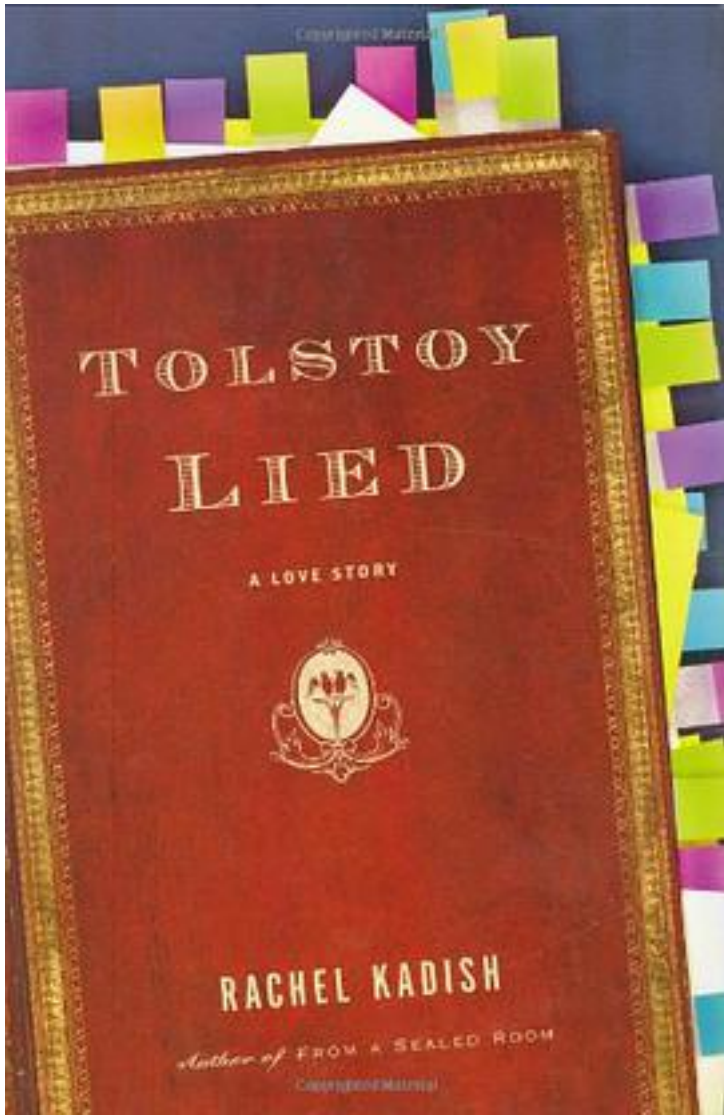


Tolstoy Lied



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Tolstoy famously wrote, "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." To Tracy Farber, thirty-three, happily single, headed for tenure at a major university, and content to build a life around friends and work, this celebrated maxim is questionable at best. Because if Tolstoy is to be taken at his word, only unhappiness is interesting; happiness must be as placid and unmemorable as a daisy in a field of a thousand daisies. Having decided to reject the petty indignities of dating, Tracy focuses instead on her secret project: to determine whether happiness can be interesting, in literature and in life, or whether it can be -- must be -- a plant with thorns and gnarled roots. It's an unfashionable proposition, and a potential threat to her job security. But Tracy is her own best example of a happy and interesting life. Little does she know, however, that her best proof will come when she falls for George, who will challenge all of her old assumptions, as love proves to be even more complicated than she had imagined. Can this young feminist scholar, who posits that "a woman's independence is a hothouse flower -- improbable, rare, requiring vigilance," find happiness in a way that fulfills both her head and her heart? Love may be the ultimate cliché, but in Rachel Kadish's hands, it is also a morally serious question, deserving of our sober attention as well as our delighted laughter.

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