

Garbo Laughs



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This is a novel about movie love. Set in Ottawa in the 1990s, it is the quixotic tale of tall, thin Harriet Browning, inflamed by the movies she was deprived of as a child. Harriet is a woman so saturated with the movies, seen repeatedly and swallowed whole, that she no longer fits into this world. Bent on seeing everything she has missed, she forms a Friday night movie club with three companions-of-the-screen: a boy who loves Frank Sinatra, a girl with Bette Davis eyes, and an earthy sidekick named Dinah for Dinah Shore. Breaking in upon this quiet backwater, in time with the devastating ice storm of 1998, come two refugees from Hollywood, the faded widow of a famous screenwriter and her movie-expert stepson. They are harsh reality. With them come blackouts, arguments, accidents, illness and sudden death. But what chance does real life stand when we can watch movies instead? What hope does real love have when movie love, in all its brief intensity, is an easy option? In this comedy of secondhand desire, movies and movie lovers come first

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