

Self Portraits: Fictions

Frederic Tuten

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"An amazing, glittering, glowing, Proustian, Conradian, Borgesian, diamond-faceted, language-studded, myth-drowned Dream!"—Cynthia Ozick

These mysterious, interrelated stories create a portrait of the author's life, both real and imagined, as he appears in each tale variously as hero, bystander, artist, and ghost, yielding an enchanting autobiography of the imagination.

Fantasy and reality collide as the book's principal characters—two lovers—meet, part, and reunite, time and again, at different stages in life and in landscapes both familiar and exotic. Death appears as a genial waiter in a café across from the Metropolitan Museum of Art; talking circus elephants console a ringmaster for his unrequited love; a young boy barters with pirates for his grandmother's soul; and as a refrigerator begins spilling mini-glaciers into a couple's East Village apartment, a voyage to Antarctica commences on an icy schooner waiting for them in Tompkins Square Park.

Love, and its mystery, is at the core of these self portraits, but love also for art, for adventure, and for the passion of being alive.



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