



Reader's Choice Reviews

William R. Potter

Goodbye Kiev by Thomas C. Almond

Finding that special someone to share a life with is a struggle for many. *Goodbye Kiev* by author Thomas C. Almond is his fictionalized recounting of how he found the woman of his dreams in the Ukraine through a marriage agency, and the challenges he faced in their relationship.

Tom is a 27-year veteran of Portland Fire and Rescue. He is divorced and lonely. He is a serious man who knows what he wants and how to get it. Nothing will stop him from finding love and a lasting relationship. Through the agency, he begins corresponding with a young woman named Lyubov in Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine. The months pass and both Tom and Lyubov are eager to meet. It is decided that they will meet in Kiev, Ukraine and that Lyubov will bring her son, Sasha. The visit goes by quickly and smoothly. Despite his Russian being less developed than he would have liked, and Lyubov speaking little English, by the end of this first visit, Tom is sure that he is very much in love with the beautiful Lyubov. He pops the question and Lyubov says yes. Another visit is planned for the summer and Tom flies home for the States. He is happy and in love and anxious to live as a family with Lyubov and Sasha in Oregon.

Shortly after his journey home, he receives an amazing letter from Lyubov telling him how much she loves him and how wonderful he is. But all is not perfect as Tom begins to notice that her messages take longer and longer to arrive. Then a shocking letter from Lyubov shakes his faith in his feelings for her. She says she doesn't think she loves Tom, she doesn't believe he truly loves her, and she suggests that he would be happier with another. Tom can't understand this abrupt change. All Lyubov will say is that she doesn't want to burden Tom with her problems.

Tom plans another trip to Ukraine even though he isn't sure Lyubov will see him. He flies to her hometown in hopes of discovering what the real problem is. He spends week after week alone and waiting for her to agree to meet him. He is patient but his patience is growing very short. Will his perseverance pay off or will he ultimately go home broken-hearted and alone?

Mr. Almond writes from his heart. Like few male authors I have read, he isn't afraid to examine and express his feelings. This is an intriguing tale of love and commitment. I found myself cheering for Tom, hoping he would get Lyubov to lower her defenses, to save the relationship. In my opinion, the book stalls a bit at Chapter 6, "The Journal Home," in which the events of the first five chapters are summarized. However, Almond quickly gets back on track pushing the story forward to the climax.

This isn't a fairytale romance. It is a poignant, realistic tale of one man's quest for love. The ending is powerful, emotional, and one you will not soon forget. I recommended *Goodbye Kiev*.

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By William Potter for Reader's Choice Reviews. <http://www.readerschoicereviews.com>