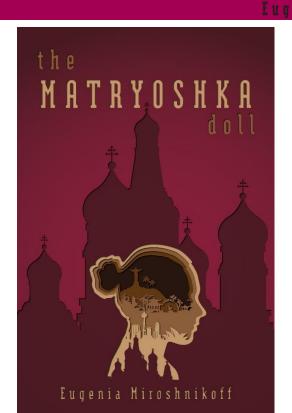
# the MATRYOSHKA Eugenia Miroshnikoff



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## THE MATRYOSHKA DOLL IS A MEMOIR DEPICTING ONE FAMILY'S STRUGGLES AND TRIUMPHS.

Tatiana is the daughter of a Russian Imperial Colonel, Ivan Georgievitch Savin; and finds her family is swept into the ravages of the Russian Revolution and the Civil War that follows. Tatiana's idyllic life is altered forever. The 1917 Revolution sweeps through Russia setting in motion the political and social reforms that lead to the formation of the Soviet Union. With the downfall of Imperial Russia, Ivan takes his family out of Russia. They journey to Harbin in China with devastating and heartbreaking events across the trail, leaving three children destitute. The terror of Communism comes to Harbin when the Soviet Russian Army liberates Harbin from Japanese rule. Tatiana, now married with children, is about to relive the horrors of Communism once again. They flee to Brazil to start a new and survive the agony of their past.

A decade later, Communism becomes a threat in Brazil. My mother, Tatiana again flees with us to find sanctuary and hope somewhere safe. At the age of fourteen, I leave my beloved Brazil behind, and I am catapulted into an unknown world. This is a chronicle of my own beautiful life in China, Brazil and now in Australia, thanks to my courageous family and the unthinkable sacrifices made to survive...



### **AUTHOR BIO**

Eugenia was born in Harbin - China. Growing up in a Russian household with pre-revolutionary morals and philosophies, her upbringing was steeped in Russian Orthodoxy and imbued in Russian history and ancestry. Eugenia is the granddaughter of Colonel Ivan Savin, who fought in the White Army against the Bolsheviks, and is why Eugenia wrote this book.

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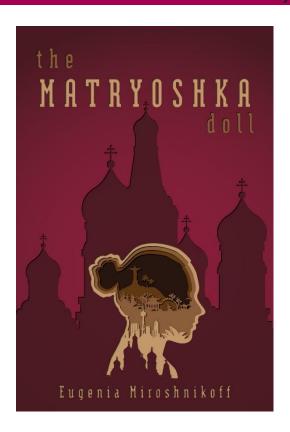
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### A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR

## WHY DID YOU WRITE 'THE MATRYOSHKA DOLL'? WHAT WERE YOUR INSPIRATIONS?

My inspiration came from my mother's stories about her family, whom I never met. These stories captivated my imagination, and they made me sad. Her parents' untimely death had a tremendous effect on my mother. As an orphan, she was often mistreated, but she never lost her sense of justice, fairness and kindness. My paternal grandparents' survival stories also affected me. Between my mother's and my grandparents' struggles during the 1917 Russian Revolution, their escape to China to escape the Red Terror that swathed Russia left a never-ending impact on me. I want their story to be heard, and I want my children to know their ancestors.

### WHAT WAS THE HARDEST PART TO WRITE?

The hardest part was writing about my father's attraction to alcohol. By writing about it, I felt I was disloyal to my mother. My mother always insisted we keep my father's behaviour a secret from society and friends. To tell my story, I had to include the hurt his drinking inflicted on my family and my friendships.

#### WHAT LITERARY PILGRIMAGES HAVE YOU GONE ON?

I have vivid memories of China, even though I was between two and five years of age. I have always had a yearning to delve into my Russian roots, as my whole childhood revolved around Russia and how in the near future, we were going back to our Mother Land. In 2014 I made a pilgrimage to China, to revisit the familiar places, but unfortunately, Harbin was a disappointment as it lost its former glory. Some Russian architecture still stands, but most fabulous buildings are dilapidated. The only place that resembled my memories of the old Harbin was the tourist attraction, a replicated Russian town called the Volga Manor. However, Russia has exceeded all my expectations during my pilgrimage in 2017, for the first time in my life. Russia, particularly Moscow, is beyond beautiful, closely followed by St Petersburg. My upbringing was centred around the greatness of the Russian monarchy, particularly that of Nicholas II. Therefore, my pilgrimage would not be complete without visiting the sacred sites in Ekaterinburg, where the Imperial family was murdered and buried. Here I met a knowledgeable guide who provided me with vital information and assisted me in tying up loose ends.

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