

Henri Sakomaa

FONTANKA 123

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Foreword

The purpose of this book is to share the stories of my relationship to Russia, to the Russians and to myself, not forgetting my numerous fellow mates from other world regions who shared those years with me. I write about my own development, and at the same time, the young Russian Federation takes its first steps after a long Soviet era. In the stories, however, I describe more my inner self, sometimes very painfully, but perhaps it's necessary in order for me to let go all of my prejudices, assumptions and even some kind of racism, and in replace to learn understanding, acceptance and how to create warm feelings towards myself and others. At the same time, my spiritual bulwark falls off and I dare to be weak and helpless, because I know, that after these experiences, I'm stronger than ever before. As a person and on my spiritual journey, I still have a long way to go, but I believe, that this book is another step in the right direction. Some of the stories are based on my own life and some are my friends' full experiences. I don't say which ones. I also take the liberty not to remember everything correctly, as it happened such a long time ago. Emotional fiction has

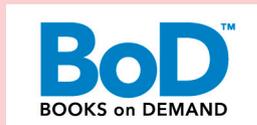
also some role in these stories, that take place in the late 1990s in St. Petersburg, the former capital of Russia. I also try to describe Russian habits and mentality without generalization. All the people I came across with were different, but also they were quite similar small people in the big country.

I want to thank my family and the Finnish and Russian states for making my studies economically possible.

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