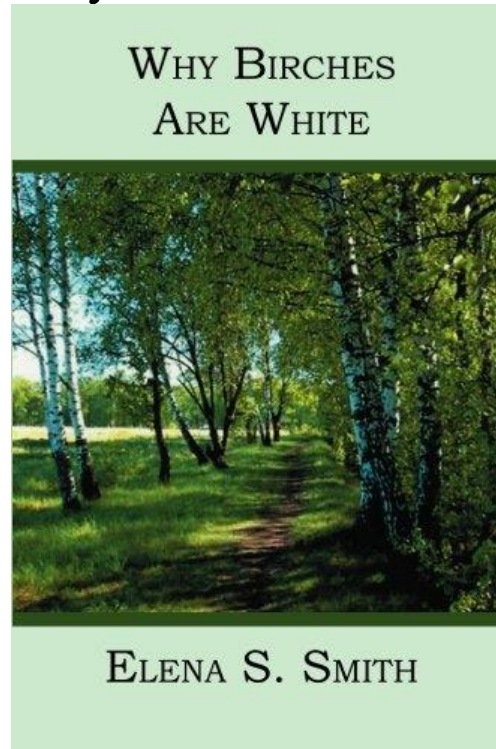


Why Birches are White



By Elena S. Smith

Reviewed by Stephen Lalonde

This book was a revelation for me. I did not have much in the way of awareness of Russia, and this book gave an honest and clear picture of the beauty and challenges in life there. The nature of the relationships explored in the book was fascinating beyond description. The voice and language of the book kept me turning pages and at times I wanted to be able to read quickly to find out what would happen next, yet I so enjoyed the beauty of the language I took my time so I could truly appreciate all of it. I will read this one again. - Stephen Lalonde, author (*Sinon of Kirra*, *Mentu the Nubian* and more.)

Reviewed by Kevin Hostbjor

To be honest, love stories are not normally found on my bookshelf. I'm a sci-fi, fantasy, mystery, suspense, chaos kind of guy. I do love a good sense of humor and admit ... in many genres, there is a romantic element. Recently, I attended a craft fair with the author, Elena Smith, and became intrigued about her journey from Russia to America. I bought her book. To my surprise and pleasure, I found *Why Birches Are White* to be a wonderful read. Elena Smith is a true writer. Her voice is clear and infectious. Her use of personal letters to demonstrate the growing relationship between a Russian woman and an American man is sweet and telling. I wanted to know more. I needed to know what happened to them. One might think a Russian born person could not write an English story without introducing a host of confusing translation issues. One would be wrong. As an author myself, I aspire to write with the same clarity and grammar

accuracy as Elena Smith. After meeting her, I'm so pleased I decided to give *Why Birches Are White* a try.



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