

How I Almost Married A Russian

What do you do after your friend drives off a bear, breaks up with your sister, gets you an autographed stick from the Soviet team and then leaves town with your girlfriend?

I'm glad you asked.

The answer? You travel halfway across the country to help the guy with a legal problem.

Of course you do.

Set in Winnipeg in the nineteen-seventies, this is the story of David Fieldman's adventures with his friend Gordy - Gorodya Shapirnikov. Gordy is in his late twenties and is a recent immigrant to Canada, having left Russia under difficult circumstances in 1975, together with his parents and his sister. On first arriving in Winnipeg, Gordy runs a TV-repair shop on Selkirk Avenue, in the city's north end. There he meets a film student named Ronni Fieldman. The two begin dating and in short order, Gordy also becomes friends with Ronni's brother David, a young computer scientist.

A natural businessman, Gordy jumps at an opportunity to own and operate a jewellery store on Hugo Street. From then on, David finds himself involved in one unusual incident after another with his Russian friend. In 1978, the friendship takes a dramatic turn. David falls in love with a beautiful woman named Klara, the translator for the visiting Soviet national hockey team, who has defected with Gordy's help.

By turns touching and hilarious, the story is told in the form of David's family memoir. From the robberies at Gordy's shop, to a trip to Regina to pick up a used van, to a series of unlikely romantic relationships, David leads us along a trail of unforgettable experiences with his unique and enigmatic friend.