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## The Ghost of Odessa

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The indomitable Isaac Babel.

On May 15, 1939, Russian writer Isaac Babel was arrested and imprisoned in Moscow. Playwright, war reporter, author of the famous story collections *Red Cavalry* and *Tales of Odessa*, Babel, who had once been knighted by Gorki, now found himself interrogated and tortured for months, accused of crimes against the State, espionage, and "defeatism." Eight months later, he would be executed without trial. During his incarceration, he revisits his life: his political, artistic, and emotional commitments and disillusionments. His soul-searching takes the form of a letter, a last will and an act of witness addressed to his daughter Nathalie, born in France, where she and her mother have sought refuge.

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