



The Last Nude

Ellis Avery

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“As erotic and powerful as the paintings that inspired it.”—Emma Donoghue, author of *Room*

Paris, 1927. In the heady years before the crash, financiers drape their mistresses in Chanel, while expatriates flock to the avant-garde bookshop Shakespeare and Company. One day in July, a young American named Rafaela Fano gets into the car of a coolly dazzling stranger, the Art Deco painter Tamara de Lempicka.

Struggling to halt a downward slide toward prostitution, Rafaela agrees to model for the artist, a dispossessed Saint Petersburg aristocrat with a murky past. The two become lovers, and Rafaela inspires Tamara's most iconic Jazz Age images, among them her most accomplished-and coveted-works of art. A season as the painter's muse teaches Rafaela some hard lessons: Tamara is a cocktail of raw hunger and glittering artifice. And all the while, their romantic idyll is threatened by history's darkening tide.

Inspired by real events in de Lempicka's history, *The Last Nude* is a tour de force of historical imagination. Ellis Avery gives the reader a tantalizing window into a lost Paris, an age already vanishing as the inexorable forces of history close in on two tangled lives. Spellbinding and provocative, this is a novel about genius and craft, love and desire, regret and, most of all, hope that can transcend time and circumstance.

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