

Sylvia B. Kiss

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Author Bio

Mini Bio

Sylvia B. Kiss is a Hungarian author of contemporary fiction whose work explores women's autonomy, intimacy, power, inherited patterns, and the social weight of personal choices.

Short Author Bio

Sylvia B. Kiss is a Hungarian author of contemporary fiction with a background in history, economics, and international business. She built her professional career in FMCG and logistics during the post-socialist transformation of Central and Eastern Europe, eventually working in senior leadership positions within male-dominated and rapidly changing corporate environments.

Her fiction explores women's autonomy, intimacy, power, family inheritance, unspoken agreements within relationships, and the wider social consequences of personal choices. She writes in Hungarian, and her work is being prepared for parallel publication in Hungarian and English. She describes her perspective as experiential feminism: feminism approached not as doctrine, but as lived experience.

Extended Author Bio

Sylvia B. Kiss is a Hungarian author of contemporary fiction whose literary perspective was shaped by history, economics, international business, and the social transformation of Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of the Iron Curtain.

Before turning more fully towards fiction, she built a career in FMCG and logistics, advancing into senior leadership at a time when international companies were establishing new operations across the region and the norms of both market capitalism and multinational corporate culture were still taking shape. Working in predominantly male environments without established models of female leadership gave her an early perspective on professional authority, economic independence, autonomy, and the changing expectations placed on women.

Her work focuses primarily on women whose lives cannot be reduced to a single role, conflict, or identity. She is interested in the points where private decisions meet wider structures: in relationships, families, professional hierarchies, friendships, political climates, and inherited social expectations. Recurring themes in her fiction include power in its subtle and everyday forms, intimacy as continuous negotiation, female friendship without rivalry, family and generational patterns, professional competence alongside private vulnerability, and the tension between freedom, responsibility, and belonging.

Kiss uses the term experiential feminism for an approach rooted in lived situations rather than ideological instruction. Her female characters are not presented as symbols or models of correct behaviour. They make imperfect and sometimes contradictory decisions within the circumstances of their own lives and remain responsible for their consequences.

Sylvia B. Kiss writes in Hungarian, and her work is being prepared for parallel publication in Hungarian and English. Her fiction brings a Central and Eastern European historical perspective into dialogue with international professional and cultural experience. Rather than offering fixed moral conclusions, she prefers complexity, dialogue, and questions that allow the reader to enter the conversation. Sylvia B. Kiss is the author of *In the Crosshairs / A célkeresztben* and is working on *The Statics of a Marriage / Házasság statikája*.

Author Note

I did not begin writing fiction because I had always planned to become a writer. It began with a family conversation about the increasing shallowness of content across almost every field. My objection was not to clichés themselves. Clichés usually survive because they contain something recognisably human. What troubled me was carelessness: the absence of attention, ideas left unfinished, and the assumption that a familiar subject no longer needed to be approached seriously.

That conversation stayed with me. Eventually, it began to turn into a story.

I write primarily about women because women's experiences are the ones I know most intimately and the ones that continue to raise the most interesting questions for me. I am interested in women not as a category or a political symbol, but as individuals living within relationships, professions, families, histories, and social expectations. They may be strong in one part of their lives and uncertain in another. They may understand the structures around them clearly and still make compromises. They may be independent without being invulnerable.

My fiction is not autobiographical, although it is inevitably shaped by experience. I have spent much of my life moving between different worlds: male and female social spaces, Eastern and Western Europe, private relationships and corporate hierarchies, professional authority and family responsibility. These experiences do not become plots directly. They become ways of seeing. They influence the questions I ask, the tensions I notice, and the moments in which a personal decision reveals something larger about power, intimacy, or belonging.

Perhaps because of the particular place and historical period in which my adult life developed, I encountered some questions earlier than many women around me. I experienced what has since become possible for millions of women: a relationship does not have to involve economic dependence, and therefore does not have to be a necessity. I also came to understand that a partnership is not always organised primarily around romance.

For many women today, the central question is no longer simply whether they are allowed to build an independent life. It is what happens after they have built one. How can love, partnership, and motherhood be integrated into an established life? How can we make space for another person without surrendering the space we have created for ourselves? How can we belong to someone without losing the shape of who we are? These are among the questions that continue to draw me to women's stories.

I am particularly interested in the invisible agreements people make with one another. The expectations that are never stated because everyone assumes they are understood. The compromises that seem minor until they begin to shape an entire life. Power, for me, does not operate only in institutions or executive positions. It is also present in marriages, friendships, families, and everyday conversations.

My Central and Eastern European background is inseparable from this perspective. I grew up in a region where political and economic systems changed more quickly than people could fully understand the new rules. At the same time, my life and work became increasingly international. That combination taught me to be cautious of simple explanations and fixed moral categories.

I do not write in order to tell the reader what to think. I am more interested in complexity than certainty, and in questions than declarations. My characters are not models of correct behaviour, and I do not want to divide them neatly into victims and villains. I want the reader to enter the story, argue with it, recognise something, reject something else, and perhaps see a familiar situation from another angle.

I do not want to stand above my readers. I would rather remain among them, as one woman with her own experiences, trying to understand what happens between people and why.

About the Name

Sylvia B. Kiss is not a fictional identity or a conventional pseudonym. All three elements of the name appear in my birth records, although this is not the form I use in private life.

Over time, the name I use in everyday life also moved away from its fully Hungarian spelling, which is difficult to read and pronounce in an international environment. My author name developed from the same practical need, while preserving the parts of my name and background that matter to me.

The surname Kiss is particularly important. It clearly retains my Hungarian connection, while remaining easy to pronounce in almost any language. Its English meaning also gives it an immediate and, for many people, positive association. For me, Sylvia B. Kiss is therefore not an assumed role or an identity separate from my private self, but a natural, internationally usable form of the names given to me by my parents.

Recurring Themes

Even at university, I disliked examples that began with some version of “all other factors being ignored.” I find that approach even more troubling in literature. Just as in economics, circumstances in life cannot be removed from their context and then used to draw general conclusions, even when they are intended only as examples.

That is precisely why I write about women whose lives cannot be reduced to a single role, conflict, or identity. I explore the points where personal choices meet social structures: in relationships, families, professional hierarchies, friendships, and inherited or silently accepted expectations. I am particularly interested in how freedom can coexist with the attachments of everyday life, how power appears in intimate situations, and how we can make room for others without losing our own.

Women’s Lives and Choices

My female characters are not symbols, nor are they models of correct behaviour. They exist within complex circumstances, live through them, and try to make decisions inside them. Their lives are shaped simultaneously by work, love, family, history, ambition, and responsibility.

Their decisions may be imperfect, contradictory, or difficult to understand from the outside. At times, even in retrospect, they may not fully understand those decisions themselves. They remain their choices, however, and they accept the consequences that come with them.

Power and Autonomy

Power is a difficult word. We often reduce its meaning to domination, use, or abuse, although in some form it is present in almost every human situation, from the most ordinary to the most intimate.

It is therefore worth broadening and refining our understanding of it. Possessing power does not necessarily mean that someone exercises or abuses it. They may simply recognise it, take it into account, or understand how it shapes a situation and the possibilities available to the people within it.

In my fiction, I am interested not only in who possesses power, but in who recognises it, who ignores it, who adapts to it, and who attempts to rearrange the balance.

Intimacy and Emotional Negotiation

Relationships are shaped not only by love, but by timing, expectations, practical circumstances, and the ability of two people to negotiate again and again what they are able to provide for one another.

In my fiction, intimacy is not a final state but a continuing dialogue. It is not something achieved once and then preserved unchanged. It must be reconsidered as circumstances, losses, successes, responsibilities, and time alter the people involved.

Family Inheritance and Generational Patterns

Families pass down more than names, habits, or material circumstances. They also transmit ideas about duty, gender roles, love, success, silence, and belonging.

From one generation to the next, these patterns have functioned as tools for interpreting and navigating the surrounding world. They helped people respond to recurring situations and offered solutions that were often useful in a relatively slowly changing environment.

In a hyper-accelerated world, however, those same patterns can become more of a burden than a source of guidance, even when we try to adapt them to new circumstances. The familiar interpretive and practical frameworks continue to operate within us, although the world for which they developed no longer exists.

This creates tension not only between generations, but within the individual. We may follow inherited patterns or consciously resist them, but in either case they remain points of reference. In the past, radically reassessing them simply because the environment had changed was largely the privilege of people in unusual circumstances, with exceptional autonomy or unusually independent minds. It was not a general social expectation.

Today, millions of people are required to question repeatedly the models they inherited for understanding the world, relationships, work, parenthood, and even ordinary daily life. Evolutionarily and culturally, we are hardly prepared for that demand.

Unspoken Agreements in Relationships

It follows that the unspoken agreements within relationships can no longer be expected to work automatically.

Many relationships are built on expectations that no one has ever articulated. At other times, the expectations may be discussed, but people still try to live by models that have long since become obsolete. We often project onto those closest to us not expectations we have consciously chosen, but social norms we have absorbed without realising it.

A person may consciously support a modern, equal partnership while still approaching care, fidelity, ambition, sacrifice, domestic responsibility, or emotional presence through inherited assumptions.

Invisible contracts are therefore dangerous not only because they remain unspoken, but because those involved may no longer know which world they came from or whether they still want them. I am interested in the moment when such assumptions become visible and the people in the relationship must decide, perhaps for the first time, what to keep, what to rewrite, and what to reject.

Female Friendship Without Rivalry

Female friendship is not a secondary element in my work, nor is it a simple, conflict-free space. It may contain disagreement, confrontation, distance, or very different life choices, but it does not have to turn into rivalry, cruelty, or intrigue.

I am interested in relationships between women in which honesty, humour, solidarity, and intellectual companionship matter more than status or external approval. These women do not have to compete for male attention, youth, success, or visibility. They are able to see one another as complete individuals.

Humour as Observation and Survival

Many people, perhaps most, think of humour primarily as a tool of ridicule. Yet humour can relieve tension, connect people, and, of course, trivialise.

Whether it wounds or helps depends on the situation, its sharpness, its direction, and its target. When we understand this, humour can support relationships and our own sense of self. It can help us see our circumstances more clearly and accept our temporary place in the world.

This is why the humour of my characters matters to me. It may be dry, stoic, satirical, and at times perhaps even cynical, but it is never cruel. It is not built on humiliation or another person's vulnerability.

The Social Consequences of Personal Choices

I witnessed a world in which individual decisions accumulated into a social spiral in which I could no longer breathe. I therefore learned through experience, rather than theory, that a private decision is rarely entirely private, whatever it may concern.

Choices about work, relationships, motherhood, independence, care, or leaving a country are shaped by broader social, economic, and cultural conditions. I also experienced how readily political movements can interpret and use such personal choices for their own purposes, attempting to create new norms through them.

At the same time, individual decisions can challenge those frameworks. This may be why my fiction is particularly drawn to the point where larger cultural, social, or political tensions become visible within individual lives.

Freedom, Responsibility, and Belonging

Freedom does not necessarily mean being alone, just as companionship does not necessarily protect us from loneliness. Belonging does not have to require the surrender of the self.

One of my recurring questions is how we can take responsibility for others, build lasting relationships, and remain part of a family or community while preserving who we are.

This requires not only the ability to give, but also the ability to receive. We must make room for others while learning to occupy and protect our own space. The question is not freedom or attachment, but how the two might exist together.

Experiential Feminism

I do not write feminism as doctrine. For me, it is lived experience. I never really had to imagine myself equal. I assumed I was. I never asked for a seat at the table; if there was an empty one, I simply took it.

I use the term experiential feminism to describe this perspective. It does not begin with a theoretical system or a set of prescribed answers, but with the situations women actually live through: work, relationships, motherhood, ambition, dependence, independence, care, authority, compromise, and the consequences of their choices.

Equality, in this sense, is not something another person or institution grants. It is the position from which a woman understands herself.

That does not mean the world will automatically treat her as an equal, or that confidence alone removes structural inequality. It means she does not begin by questioning whether she is entitled to participate, decide, speak, lead, or occupy space.

At the same time, lived equality does not make women identical, nor does it produce a single correct model of female life. Economic independence, professional authority, partnership, motherhood, solitude, intimacy, and freedom can be combined in many different ways. Each solution creates its own tensions and requires its own compromises.

This is why I do not want my female characters to demonstrate the correct political or moral position. They are not illustrations of an argument. They make choices from within particular lives, shaped by their histories, circumstances, desires, blind spots, and responsibilities. Sometimes they recognise the structures around them clearly. Sometimes they reproduce the very expectations they believe they have rejected.

For me, feminism becomes most interesting at precisely this point: where declared principles meet lived behaviour, where autonomy encounters attachment, and where equality must be worked out not only in public institutions but in relationships, families, homes, and ordinary decisions.

I prefer to leave these tensions open. My fiction does not ask the reader to agree with every woman in it. It asks that each of them be taken seriously as a complete person.

AI Use

The stories, characters, fictional worlds, ideas, and original Hungarian texts published under the name Sylvia B. Kiss are my own work.

I use AI tools in clearly defined supporting roles. These may include language review, editorial feedback, assistance with the English translation of my Hungarian texts, technical preparation, formatting, and the development of visual and communication materials.

AI does not make independent authorial decisions on my behalf, nor does it write my stories. I write every text published under my name, and I conceive and create every piece of visual content. Every translation, edited version, and visual is reviewed, selected, and approved by me.

The English translation method was developed from sample translations prepared by me and by the bilingual editor. These samples established the linguistic, stylistic, and authorial principles used throughout the translation process. The translations are produced through a structured, multi-stage workflow, and every version is reviewed against both the original Hungarian text and the established translation model. AI supports the consistent transfer of voice, meaning, rhythm, and narrative choices; it does not create an independent English version. The final English text is reviewed and shaped by a bilingual human editor in consultation with me.

Some promotional and character-based visual materials are created with the assistance of generative AI. These materials are identified as AI-assisted where they are published.

For me, AI is a working tool, not an author.

AI-assisted does not mean AI-authored.

Books

This section provides an overview of Sylvia B. Kiss's current and forthcoming titles. Full book descriptions, publication details, formats, ISBNs, purchase options, and review access are maintained on the dedicated book pages at sylviabkiss.com.

In the Crosshairs / A célkeresztben

A contemporary multi-POV novel published in Hungarian and English, following five women through their lives, choices, and relationships. Full book information, publication details, available formats, ISBNs, purchase options, and review access are provided on the dedicated book page.

The Statics of a Marriage / Házasság statikája

A forthcoming contemporary novel exploring marriage, intimacy, autonomy, attachment, and the invisible power dynamics that operate within relationships. Full book information, publication status, language editions, formats, ISBNs, and rights information will be provided on the dedicated book page.

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