



ALEXANDER
ZVYAGINTSEV

THE NUREMBERG TRIALS



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Translated from the Russian by Christopher Culver



AD VERBUM

Published with the support of the Institute
for Literary Translation, Russia

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THE NUREMBERG TRIALS

by Alexander Zvyagintsev

Translated from the Russian by Christopher Culver

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CONTENTS

AN ENCOUNTER WITH A TINGE OF PARTING

PART I. THE PROFESSIONALS' GAMES

CHAPTER I. AND REMEMBER ME!	10
CHAPTER II. THE LABYRINTH OF HELL	14
CHAPTER III. THE DEVIL'S SOLITAIRE	20
CHAPTER IV. CHEAP TRICKS	27
CHAPTER V. A QUEEN COMES ON STAGE	31
CHAPTER VI. MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES	34
CHAPTER VII. AN OBLIGATORY VISIT.	37
CHAPTER VIII. STANDING ON CEREMONY	41
CHAPTER IX. TO GO OVER A COLLAPSING BRIDGE	46
CHAPTER X. WHAT TO DO WITH THE ENEMY'S CORPSE?.	52
CHAPTER XI. THE CITY OF THE FALLEN	54
CHAPTER XII. NO ENTRY	59
CHAPTER XIII. A FIRING-SQUAD GIRL	62
CHAPTER XIV. VAE VICTIS	68
CHAPTER XV. IF I HAD MY WAY!	72
CHAPTER XVI. THE NAZI GOLD	79
CHAPTER XVII. BLUE SUITCASES	82
CHAPTER XVIII. DON'T FORGET TO DRAW THE CURTAINS!.	91

PART II. A TURBULENT AUTUMN

CHAPTER I. YOU ARE CRIMINALS, THAT'S ALL!	96
CHAPTER II. THE EXPERIMENTERS.	100
CHAPTER III. MARBLE TOMBS AWAIT US!	105
CHAPTER IV. WHY RUDENKO?	110
CHAPTER V. GRACE AND LADYSHIP	114
CHAPTER VI. NO DEFENSE AGAINST SUCH CHARGES	118
CHAPTER VII. A CALL FROM THE HEREAFTER	124
CHAPTER VIII. THE SCOURGING OF HARLOTS	129
CHAPTER IX. THE WHITE AND THE RED	136
CHAPTER X. ESCAPE FROM HELL	143
CHAPTER XI. PUTTING THE CAT AMONG THE PIGEONS	148
CHAPTER XII. PEGGY APPEARS	153
CHAPTER XIII. JUST A FEW MINUTES OF FEAR	158
CHAPTER XIV. FROM THE WORLD OF HALLUCINATIONS	166
CHAPTER XV. A REAL SOVIET MAN.	175
CHAPTER XVI. TRUTH SERUM	186
CHAPTER XVII. THE PRINCESS HAS LEFT FOR PARIS	195
CHAPTER XVIII. I WON'T FORGIVE AND FORGET	200

AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU

PART I. SECRET ARRANGEMENTS

CHAPTER I. DO THIS!	206
CHAPTER II. COUNTER-ACCUSATIONS	213
CHAPTER III. SECRET AGREEMENTS	218
CHAPTER IV. ARE YOU WITH US?	222

CHAPTER V. PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT	227
CHAPTER VI. IT'S A MATTER OF YOUR HONOR	231
CHAPTER VII. A DREAM GIRL FOR MEN WHO AWAITED DEATH	234
CHAPTER VIII. SHE WILL SACRIFICE HERSELF	241
CHAPTER IX. IT WAS AN AMERICAN!	244
CHAPTER X. REAL GERMANS	250
CHAPTER XI. I LIVED IN ANOTHER WORLD	253
CHAPTER XII. TO WAIT AND KEEP THE FAITH	263
CHAPTER XIII. MY ARM IS NOT SHAKING	265
CHAPTER XIV. NO NEED TO DRAW OUT THE TORMENT	271
CHAPTER XV. NOTHING CAN BE DONE	276
CHAPTER XVI. LET'S NOT DO ANYTHING STUPID, COLONEL!	282
CHAPTER XVII. YOU HAVE REALLY CHANGED...	286
CHAPTER XVIII. HOW COULD HE HAVE SURRENDERED?	290
CHAPTER XIX. WATCH WHAT YOU SAY!	303
CHAPTER XX. THE TEUTONIC KNIGHT	309

PART II. TOWARDS FATE

CHAPTER I. FÜNFHAUSEN	313
CHAPTER II. ENOUGH FORMER SS MEN FOR THAT	319
CHAPTER III. GIVE HIM ROSES!	324
CHAPTER IV. THE COURT CALLS FIELD MARSHAL PAULUS	330
CHAPTER V. HE'S TELLING THE TRUTH	335
CHAPTER VI. FOR NOTHING IS SECRET, THAT SHALL NOT BE MADE MANIFEST	340
CHAPTER VII. ONE ON ONE	345
CHAPTER VIII. SHOOT HIM WITHOUT A TRIAL OR CONSEQUENCES!	351

CHAPTER IX. MY LAST FRIEND	354
CHAPTER X. THE RUSSIAN PROSECUTOR WON'T LET GO OF HIM . .	361
CHAPTER XI. NIBELUNG LOYALTY	367
CHAPTER XII. SPEAKING GENERAL TO GENERAL	375
CHAPTER XIII. A CAT DRIVEN INTO A CORNER.	379
CHAPTER XIV. SOMEONE IS STANDING BEHIND HIM!	384
CHAPTER XV. A DUCK DECOY	387
CHAPTER XVI. THE ATOMIC PROJECT	392
CHAPTER XVII. MONA FROM PITTSBURGH	398
CHAPTER XVIII. NUREMBERG AGAIN	402
CHAPTER XIX. THE DAY OF JUDGMENT HAS COME	406
CHAPTER XX. WHEN EVERYTHING WAS OVER	409
CHAPTER XXI. THIRTEEN STEPS TO HELL	412
CHAPTER XXII. ON A PURE MONDAY	417
 EPILOGUE	 421



AN ENCOUNTER WITH
A TINGE OF PARTING

PART I. THE PROFESSIONALS' GAMES

CHAPTER I. AND REMEMBER ME!

All the newspapers in the USA were buzzing about the events in the newly defeated Germany, about the throngs of prisoners who no longer knew where to go, about the search for Hitler and the other high-ranking Nazis who were either in hiding or had taken their own lives. Nazi Germany was finished; all that was left was to deal with its rotten remains and decide what could and should be put in its place. There was no shortage now of heroic types ready to take the most extreme measures: "Kill them all! If you leave even a single one, they'll start breeding again like rabbits and you'll have to start all over again," such were the words of one irate statesman on the Germans, though in the past his view had been quite moderate. The more cunning and cold-blooded preferred like always to leave it in the hands of others: "Let the Russians do the dirty work. We won't have anything to do with it."

A man, around 30 years of age, put his newspaper aside and sat deep in thought. Outside his New York apartment the whole city was teeming, overjoyed at a triumphant victory. No one, whether in New York or anywhere else, was aware that this man who had been studying the American press was a deeply embedded Soviet agent, known by the code name "Hector". Even in Moscow only a handful of people knew of this.

As he had often done in recent days, Hector was thinking about his father, who had died before the war even began.

Hector had grown up like any ordinary American: high school, football, college, a free and independent life on campus with all that came with it. His mother had died in a car accident when he was only 12. His father was always busy with work; a State Department employee, he was always being called to Washington and rarely seen at their suburban home. Hector had therefore come to feel himself a lonely hunter, who could only rely on himself.

Yet he loved and respected his father, sensing in him a serious and tense inner world and a firm belief in the existence of certain values that must be preserved, whatever they might be. What these values were exactly, Hector could guess during the infrequent times that the two of them talked seriously. His father never appealed to him to believe in something or lectured him, he spoke only of his views on some event or another, letting his son make his own conclusions. Thus Hector learned that his father despised distinctions of class, the division of people into rich and poor, that he had little love for extreme competition where people would do anything to excel above the others and push them down. He considered the American love for business to be a rat race, where, if you didn't succeed, you could end up in the dump. The eternal pursuit of money, his father thought, left little time for other things, even the pleasure of spending it. Some of these talks were soon forgotten, but something was yet firmly lodged in Hector's thinking.

His father was especially troubled by everything that was happening in Germany since Hitler came to power. He believed that this man was the devil himself and capable of leading the world into a horrific catastrophe, and he had to be stopped at any cost. From some of what his father said, Hector could conclude that in America there were people who had not only helped Hitler seize power, they even helped to arm him, to create the most advanced and well-equipped of armies.

In the late Thirties, after he graduated from college, Hector left for Europe to see the Old World, the native land of his ancestors. A telegram unexpectedly arrived with news that his father was gravely ill and Hector had to return. Upon arrival he could hardly recognize his father: liver cancer had eaten away at him. When they were left alone, his father said with labored breathing, "I want to tell you something that might be too much if you heard it from others... I've been collaborating with the Russians for several years now... I've been passing on information that might help them in the fight against Hitler."

Hector was stunned and could only sit there silently. There was a ringing emptiness in his head. His father saw what he felt and also remained silent for some time, breathing heavily. Then he said, "You know that I consider Germany in Hitler's grasp to be the gravest danger for the entire world. But it's not just that. I am convinced that only the Russians can stop him. There is no one else. The French simply do not want to fight, the British are obsessed with the idea of foisting him on the Russians and don't want any more to do with it. We Americans

believe that we're completely safe and so we're sitting out, hoping it'll be left to others. Many people in this country are waiting to enjoy the spectacle of the Russians and Germans bleeding each other dry. But the way I see it, that's mistaken and mean-spirited..."

Hector continued to stay silent and look at his father.

"That's why I decided that we've got to help the Russians... I know that they're no angels and I don't like a lot of what Stalin's doing, but... Only he can smash Hitler, only Russia with its huge forces. After they beat Hitler, surely they'll change..."

His father gasped for air. Large drops of sweat could be seen on his jaundiced forehead with its prominent blue veins.

"That's all. Now you know... I hope you'll understand my decision. I don't care about money. I just did what I thought was necessary. There's a piece of paper on the table, it'll tell you how to get in touch with the Russians, if you... Do whatever you see fit."

His father died the same evening. For the next six months Hector was wracked with doubt. Yet the world constantly pointed to how his father had been right. The West maintained its cold stance towards the war, counting on the fact that Germany and the Soviet Union would destroy each other. All of Russia's attempts to build a coalition against Hitler coolly and methodically came to naught. In these days, the United States had already taken a large number of refugees from Germany, and Hector learned firsthand what Hitler's system was really like. It was clear that Europe could not hold out against Hitler's forces, that the Germans would simply parade through the continent. The Russians were the last hope. It was nearly by accident that he found out then that Ford and General Motors were, through their German branches, actively participating in building up the motorized forces of Hitler's army. The Soviet Union was doomed to a terrible fight. By now his mind was firmly made up, and he used his father's note to contact the Russians...

Now, several years since his father's death, and when Hitler had been defeated at the cost of so many lives, chiefly Russian ones, he thought that his father had been right. He had made the right choice when he decided to help them. But what now, when the war was over? Should he become a spy, disclosing the secrets of his own country?

Outside his window, New York continued to celebrate.

Notes

As reported by TASS, on April 27, 1942 the USSR presented a note to all foreign embassies entitled "On the monstrous atrocities and violence of the German fascist invaders in occupied Soviet areas and on the responsibility of the German government and high command for these crimes."

On November 2, 1942 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted the decree "On the formation of an Extraordinary State Committee to establish and investigate the atrocities of the fascist invaders and their accomplices and the damage they have brought against citizens, collective farms, public organizations, state enterprises and institutions of the USSR."

CHAPTER II. THE LABYRINTH OF HELL

“What are we looking for here?”

“The truth. We’re looking for the truth. What else?”

“I mean specifically.”

“Well, if you mean specifically, we’re looking for truth that Hitler really committed suicide, and didn’t just flee in a submarine to Australia...”

“They’ve already found two bodies!”

“That’s the problem. There should be just one! One, but the real one! The man himself! We don’t need any doubles...”

Their minds were weary from their long trawl through the musty catacombs of Hitler’s underground bunker and their tired eyes were visibly sore. The endless corridors that resembled a labyrinth, the dark crannies and secret rooms, there seemed no end to them. Here and there lights shone and a fetid mist hung in the air.

Everywhere there were traces of a hurried flight: the floors were strewn with papers, overturned books, photographs and postcards marked with the prints of soles, an officer’s uniform carelessly thrown down in haste, boots in non-matching sizes, foppish dress uniforms with swastikas and caps... In one room they found a number of red velvet boxes containing Iron Cross medals, while another room held a mountain of copies of *Mein Kampf*. On top of them was a first-aid kit in fine leather and a white metal box that, after they had carefully opened it, proved to be a device for measuring air quality – the inhabitants of the bunker, so far under the earth, worried that they would be smoked out like animals.

“The smell here,” Captain Karpovich grimaced.

“It’s the ordinary smell of the underworld,” Major Rebrov grinned back at him. “It’s the den of the Nazi beast, after all. Did you think it would smell like roses here?”

Major Denis Rebrov and Captain Mikhail Karpovich were members of the same search team founded at Moscow’s order right after Soviet forces had entered Germany, with the express goal of finding and cap-

turing high-ranking Nazis. When they stormed into Berlin, their team, reporting directly to General Filin, turned their search directly to Hitler himself or his body in the underground bunker under the Reich Chancellery.

Rebrov and Karpovich were still young, but the years of war, missions and the most demanding intelligence work weighed heavily on their shoulders. They made a good team. Rebrov always led, but this didn't bother the good-natured and hardworking Karpovich at all. Rebrov had managed to graduate from the university literally the same day that the war broke out. He spoke German fluently and his superiors appreciated him for his English skills, his ability to think quickly and make independent decisions on the fly. Everyone knew that the head of the intelligence division, Gen. Filin, had an especial sympathy for him. And for good reason, Karpovich thought, men like Rebrov were sorely needed. He ought to be a general. Karpovich himself could hardly wait to return to civilian life – before the war he had studied car repair in a technical school and got engaged to a girl.

Karpovich kicked down yet another door and peered into a small room. He recoiled.

A table stood in the middle of the room, covered with a white tablecloth. Right on the tablecloth lay the body of a dead man in the black dress uniform of an SS officer. His polished shoes shone with a deathly gleam.

"Don't touch him," Rebrov warned as he peered into the room over Karpovich's shoulder. "He might be booby-trapped. He looks too enticing..."

They carefully walked around the corpse.

"He's got a bullet hole in his temple," noted Karpovich.

"I can see that. I don't know who the hell this is, but it's not Hitler... Let's mark the door and warn the sappers."

"Yeah, no one wants to die after the war's over," Karpovich muttered as he marked a large cross on the door with chalk.

"When are they going to let us go home, eh?" Karpovich asked yet again, kicking the dress uniform jacket of some Nazi bigwig to the side. "Do we really have to hang around here until we've caught every Himmler?"

"You did spend the whole war dreaming of getting your hands on them..."

"I did, but I feel like something is drawing me home!"

Karpovich suddenly perked up. "Listen, what would you do to him if we found him? Just imagine, we open that door there and Hitler's just sitting there, alive. The man himself! What would you do to him, huh? Honestly?"

"We'll find him, you'll see." Rebrov gestured, "Open it."

As with so many doors before, Karpovich knocked this one down with a kick and in the light of their lantern they glimpsed a man in a German uniform sitting on the floor. With his hands he was shielding his face from the blinding rays.

"Hands up!" Karpovich barked, pointing his gun at the German.

The German, without rising up from the floor, docilely raised his hands. He was clearly mortified with fear. Then he clumsily moved to all fours and got up on his knees. He froze in that position, on his knees with his hands up.

"Don't shoot! I'm unarmed. Please, don't shoot!"

Rebrov quickly looked around the room and couldn't help but frown.

"What a smell! Have you been sitting here long?"

"I don't know, a few days..."

"Mikhail, move him to another room before we suffocate in here..."

After Karpovich led the man into a room where several tables and chairs had been preserved, he ordered the German to sit on a chair in the middle of the room. Karpovich himself sat authoritatively at the head of the table, swept several papers and photographs from it in disgust, set his rifle in front of him, and stared hard at the prisoner. Rebrov casually perched on a chair near the door. Their actions followed a clearly defined logic; they had already carried out dozens of interrogations before.

"Who are you?" Karpovich asked.

"Private Joachim Fisch, sir."

"From what unit?"

"SS Begleitkommando Adolf Hitler..."

Karpovich and Rebrov exchanged a meaningful glance

"So, you were Hitler's bodyguard?" ascertained Rebrov.

Fisch turned towards him. His face, dirty and overgrown with stubble, showed a desire to answer questions clearly and in as much detail as possible. "I dealt with communications – I passed on dispatches, letters, newspapers. I carried out some personal assignments. Lately I was working as a telephone operator, I worked at the switchboard..."

Karpovich cut him off, "Where is Hitler? Where did he run off to? How? Who helped him?"

"Hitler shot himself, sir!"

"You're lying! Everyone knows that there was a body double of Hitler in the bunker, and the real Hitler fled Berlin. Where did he go? We got his personal pilot, he said you knew everything! Hans Baur, Hitler's pilot. You know the guy?"

"Of course I know Hans Baur, but..."

"No buts! Either you spill your guts or we'll shoot you! Right here and now! How did Hitler get out of Berlin? Who helped him? Who was with him?"

The German, still keeping his hands visible on his knees, trembled. The men could hear how he breathed air into his dry throat in small gasps.

Rebrov stood up and moved towards the German, who shrank from him and closed his eyes.

"What about the body lying in the room next to the fire extinguisher?" Rebrov asked him softly.

"That's Truschke, sir. He shot himself."

"From fear? Or was he too dedicated to the cause, he couldn't handle the fall of the Thousand-Year Reich?"

"No, because of his wife."

"What?!" Karpovich couldn't contain his surprise.

"Because of his wife. She was pregnant, she was going to give birth soon, but then he suddenly found out the child wasn't his. His wife had cheated on him. He put his dress uniform on and..."

"The life of an SS man," Karpovich shook his head. "It's a real love story."

"Let's go," Rebrov ordered the German, who then tried to stand up but couldn't.

"Are you going to shoot me?"

"Us? No," Rebrov shrugged.

"We're going to cook you and eat you," Karpovich laughed. "Listen, Rebrov, let's go back up, we can interrogate him there. I don't want to stay here another minute. I feel like I'm going to vomit!"

They had gone out into the hallway and managed to take only a few steps before the sound of a rifle hit them. The reverberation of shots in the narrow corridor hurt their ears.

Fisch, who had been walking in front, grabbed his shoulders and fell to the floor. Rebrov and Karpovich dropped alongside him. The hallway shook with another series of shots. Then, silence descended.

From around a corner a figure appeared, half-crouched and holding a German rifle. Keeping low to the ground, it moved toward them. When it was only a few steps from Fisch, shots rang out. It was Rebrov who was shooting, after he had rolled over on his back and gripped his pistol with both hands.

The figure jerked, fell to the side and remained frozen on the floor”

Without turning around, Rebrov asked, “Karpovich! Mikhail, you OK?”

Karpovich could only give a nearly inaudible moan in reply.

Rebrov, continuing to fire, turned over on his belly and then stood up, as he put one bullet after another into the man who had fallen. When his rounds had finished, he rushed to Karpovich. The captain was lying on his back, his lifeless eyes staring at the ceiling and bloody foam bubbling on his lips.

“You got him, you bastard, and after the war was already over.” he whispered with his mouth clenched, lacking the strength to even part his lips. “I won’t get to see...”

Staggering and squinting at the sudden daylight, Fisch emerged from a cellar window in the courtyard of the Reich Chancellery, which had been completely leveled. He stood there for some time, taking deep breaths. Rebrov’s stoic face appeared in the window behind him. When Fisch saw him, he rushed to Rebrov and held out his hand to help him climb out. “I’m here, sir,” he quickly muttered. “I’m not trying to run away! I don’t know who that man with the rifle was. Don’t kill me! I’ve got a wife and little girl!”

Rebrov looked around at the bombed courtyard, still burning, and the ruins of the walls. He seemed to hardly know where he was.

A dust-covered jeep approach them and a man, no longer young, jumped out. His officer’s uniform could not hide his slight, awkward, and completely civilian figure. His stern face, cut with deep wrinkles, and his mysterious gray eyes clashed with his awkward external appearance.

“Denis!”

Rebrov turned to look. His lips twitched. “Mikhail. Karpovich... They killed him,” he could barely manage to get the words out.

“Who did?”

“In the Reich Chancellery cellar. Some idiot suddenly jumped out at us.”

“This guy?” Filin turned his gaze to Fisch.

The German shrank with fear and raised his hands, frantically shaking his head.

“No,” Rebrov shook his head. “This one surrendered. He had been just sitting there for days, afraid to poke his head out. He’s from the Begleitkommando, he was with Hitler to the end.”

“Well then, we’ve got some matters to discuss...”

Rebrov shrugged his shoulders

“Comrade general, we’ve got to get Mikhail out of here. I’m going back for him...”

“Wait! I’ll give you some men to help,” Filin shouted after him.

Rebrov seemed not to hear him and without speaking crawled back into the cellar window.

“Quickly, follow him,” Filin ordered the two machine gunners that accompanied him. “And watch out down there!”

Notes

The War Cabinet still saw objections to a formal state trial of war criminals for the most notorious Nazis whose crimes had no geographic location. If, however, their two great Allies definitely wanted a judicial trial of such men, the British were willing to bow to them in the matter. ... [Eden] stated that the British understood that the normal military courts of the four Allies would be used to take care of the ordinary war crimes committed inside Germany.

From the memorandum of
a conversation on the investigation
of war crimes, held at the Fairmont Hotel
in San Francisco on May 3, 1945.

CHAPTER III. THE DEVIL'S SOLITAIRE

Fisch, who was used to standing at attention, was devouring Filin, seated at a desk, with his eyes, just as a few days before he had done with Hitler, Goebbels, and Himmler.

Filin, looking up at him with his clear eyes, asked in an unexpectedly gentle tone, "What year were you born in?"

"1920!" Fisch answered sprightly.

"1920! You're still young. Why should you die, soldier? You've got your whole life ahead of you. You ought to be grateful you're still alive in the midst of all this carnage. Do you have a family?"

"A wife and daughter, general."

"A wife and daughter. You ought to feel some responsibility for them."

"That's right, general, I do. I'd do anything to see them again!"

"That's good. So, you were with Hitler until the end, and you are ready to swear that it was Adolf Hitler himself and not his body double?"

"That's right, general. He had lost a lot of weight recently, of course, but it was him."

"How many years did you serve him?"

"Since May 1940."

"Well, that's certainly long enough to be able to tell Hitler from his double, isn't it?"

"That's right!"

"So, you wouldn't be mistaken? And if it suddenly turned out that Hitler had fled nonetheless and was in hiding, and you're lying and covering for him, do you understand what's going to happen to you?"

"I do."

"And..."

"He killed himself. It was on April 30. I ran into him in the hallway. He walked past without saying anything. Some time later he and

Eva Braun took their leave of the people closest to them and retired to their room. In the hallway I heard a cry, "Linge, I think that will be all!"

"Who's Linge?"

"Hitler's valet."

"Did you hear the gunshots yourself?"

"No."

"Where were you at that time?"

"In the switchroom."

"Alone?"

"With Hentschel and Retzlaff."

"Who are they?"

"Civilian employees in the bunker. Then there was a deathly silence. I couldn't stand it any longer, I looked out into the hallway and saw Linge and Günsche, Hitler's adjutant, go into the room that the Führer was in. Hitler was sitting on a sofa next to a table with his head slumped on his chest. Eva Braun was next to him, with her legs folded and her head slumped all the way down on her knees. She was wearing a dark blue dress with a white collar in the shape of little flowers..."

"Little flowers. Did you go into the room?"

"No?"

"How far were you standing from Hitler's body?"

"About six meters."

"What happened next?"

"I felt uneasy, I wanted to leave, but then I came back. Now Hitler's body had been laid out on the floor. People from his security detail were standing next to him. They lifted him up and wrapped him in a gray blanket. Then they carried him out the emergency exit. His boots were sticking out of the blanket... Then Retzlaff ran up to me and said 'They're burning the boss! Come on, let's go up and watch!' He was in a very excited state, completely crazy. We were all in that state..."

"And then?"

"I totally refused to go."

"Why?"

"I... I didn't want to see it. And then... All of us there were simply frozen with fear. We didn't understand anything of what happened. I just remember being afraid that 'Gestapo Müller', as we called him, would shoot us all on the spot so that there wouldn't be any witnesses left."

"So the Gestapo chief Heinrich Müller was there at the time? In the bunker?"

“Yes. I had seen him shortly before all of this happened... I’m telling you, we in the bunker were terrified that the secret police would kill us all to wipe out any and all traces.”

Filin sat for a moment deep in thought.

“Goebbels was still in the bunker after his death...”

“Yes, general, he lived there with his wife and children. He had six kids and they would run around the bunker laughing and playing. It was creepy. On April 26 – I remember the date well – Hanna Reitsch, she’s an aviator, managed to land a light plane right at the Brandenburg Gate on Unter den Linden street...”

“Yes, that’s why they removed the streetlights from there...”

“I heard Reitsch trying to persuade Goebbels’ wife to leave the children with her. ‘Well, if you want to remain here, so be it’ she said, ‘But why the kids?’ But Magda said that her and her husband had already decided everything, they had their own ideas about the children’s future. While they were talking, the children were playing in the next room...”

“When did you see Goebbels for the last time? In what circumstances?”

“We knew that he had decided to kill himself in the bunker along with his wife and kids.”

“After killing their own children.”

“Yes, you’re probably right. His children were aged four to twelve and they still didn’t understand anything of what was going on. I’m telling you, they spent the whole time playing. On May 1, Magda came out of their room and walked past me as I was sitting at the switchboard with the door open. I saw tears in her eyes. She sat down and started playing solitaire, and then Goebbels came out of their room. He stood there watching his wife. He asked her, ‘What are you doing?’ Without looking at him, she said, ‘I’m playing solitaire.’”

“Before that she had poisoned her own children. All six of them...”

“Yes, sir. I can’t imagine how a person could do such a thing! And then Artur Axmann, the leader of the Hitler Youth, came in and just started talking, reminiscing about the past. Magda made some coffee. But the children...”

“The children were laying in the next room, poisoned by their own mother.”

“Yes. That’s when I decided to leave. Goebbels came to me and I told him that. He said it was all over and shook my hand. It was the first time ever, he had never done such a thing before.”

"I wouldn't be proud of that."

"I just want you to believe me, general, I'm not hiding anything and I'm only telling you the truth. I didn't say anything as he took his leave. I was the last soldier to leave this kingdom of death."

"So, when Goebbels killed himself, you weren't present and you didn't see his body?"

"No."

"What about Bormann? He also stayed to the very end."

"Yes. He gathered a group of people, they decided to try to break out of Berlin and head west. Several officers were in that group, but I didn't go with them. I wasn't anyone to them anyway, a soldier like me. General, believe me, I just relayed dispatches, passed on letters and newspapers, and worked the telephones. My duties were to always be at hand, but without anyone noticing me. I wasn't a member of the Nazi Party, I didn't join the Hitler Youth. I just did my duty as a soldier. I did it honestly."

"And if they had asked you to kill someone?" Filin smiled. "Shoot them?"

"They wouldn't have ordered me to do that. There were other people for that. I carried out other duties. For example, I passed on presents that Hitler sent famous people on their birthdays, like the boxer Max Schmeling or the actress Olga Chekhova. She's an amazingly beautiful woman, Hitler really admired her..."

"Where does she live?"

"In Kladow, it's a suburb of Berlin. She's got a house there..."

He could hardly be lying, Filin thought wearily. He's too scared, he really wants to stay alive. And he's not smart enough to lie. He talks about what he saw. But he didn't see everything. Who knows what happened in Hitler's room, and whose shoes were sticking out from under the blanket...

After trawling through the smoking ruins of Berlin, Gen. Filin's jeep broke free of the city and hit the highway. It soon stopped in front of a group of Soviet soldiers who were lazily smoking in the sunshine. Several steps away from them, a middle-aged German man in civilian clothes was sitting on the ground with his head down.

Filin and Rebrov got out of the car and walked towards them. When the soldiers saw the officers, they threw their cigarettes down.

"What's going on here?" Filin asked impatiently.

"Comrade general, allow me to report," a young, mustached sergeant, clearly hailing from the Caucasus, rushed up. "We've detained this kraut. We noticed that he's been hanging around here for a few days now. He's

clearly on the lookout for something. It's very suspicious. Obviously he's former military..."

Filin turned to Rebrov. "You talk to him, Denis."

While Rebrov was interrogating the German, Filin absentmindedly looked around, thinking his own thoughts.

"Comrade General!" The sergeant from the Caucasus came up to him. "May I speak with you?"

"Sure, sergeant. What is it?" Filin sighed.

"Tell me, did Hitler really shoot himself? Or take poison? People are saying that he flew off somewhere and his guards shot his body double and burned the corpse..."

Filin wearily nodded. "That's what people are saying."

The other soldiers were listening keenly to their conversation.

"They're also saying that he headed for the sea, that a submarine was waiting for him there that would take him to Antarctica, where a secret lair had been prepared..."

"What, to Antarctica?" Filin laughed. "He went to join the penguins?"

"That's what people are saying, comrade general."

"I know what people are saying. I've heard it, too. Some bodies have been found in the meantime, and one of them should be Hitler's. They're trying to establish which one is his."

"I understand, comrade general. I hope to God the bastard didn't get away!"

"He shouldn't have..."

Rebrov came up to them.

"Well?" Filin raised his brows.

"The devil knows! He says that an acquaintance of his called him here and said he had something important to tell him, but then he never showed up. He doesn't know what the guy wanted to tell him." Rebrov looked around.

"It's a strange place to meet someone, right next to the road. What's that thing there?"

Rebrov stepped aside and kicked at a metal lever sticking out of the ground among the ruins of a small building. "It's some kind of lever," he said. He tugged at it several times, first with one hand and then with two.

"Careful, Denis!" Filin stopped him. "What if it's mined?"

But it was already too late. Behind them a screeching was heard that gradually grew louder, and part of the asphalt surface of the road began to slowly shift, revealing a dark tunnel leading underground. The sol-

diers stared slack-jawed in amazement. Rebrov jumped up and rushed to the German.

"What's down there? What's down there, I'm asking you?"

"I don't know! I don't know. Heinrich told me nothing about it," the German frantically sought to defend himself. "I don't know!"

"Well, let's have a look," Filin said calmly. "It might be an underground hangar. Yesterday some of Hitler's guards said something about that during the interrogation. And not only Hitler's men... Just be careful, we've had enough running into idiots with rifles..."

As they made their way down the tunnel, descending at an incline, they reached an enormous underground hangar containing three light aircraft.

"It must have been prepared for Hitler himself," one of the soldiers gasped.

"They would have taken off right from the highway, using it as a runway," Filin suggested.

The soldiers continued to argue about Hitler.

"Exactly, Hitler could have flown off from here!"

"And how could he have gotten here from his bunker? You think he crawled here?"

"Through an underground pathway! There are such things there. I was there, I know..."

Filin, interrupting their conversation, called the sergeant over and calmly said,

"So, sergeant, you'll stay in charge here. Don't allow anyone to enter. A team from SMERSH will come with sappers, they'll inspect everything. Let them look for any underground pathways. As for this guy," he pointed to the German, "hand him over to them."

"Yes, sir, comrade general!"

"Let's go, Denis. There's no one still alive here. The others can manage without us."

Notes

According to the intelligence received by our reconnaissance, the servicemen at the Travemünde air base were ordered in the last weeks of the war to continually maintain a four-engine plane

in a state of readiness which would be able to carry a large amount of fuel. The plane may have been intended to allow Hitler to escape to Japan. It could accommodate only three passengers, apparently Hitler and Eva Braun along with one other person close to him. Besides this plane, three hydroplanes were also kept at this secret air base in a state of full readiness...

CHAPTER IV. CHEAP TRICKS

Several soldiers from the 110th American Airborne Division commanded by an officer with a Clark Gable mustache and the same appearance of a southern gentlemen, slowly proceeded in two jeeps up along a winding mountain road in the Bavarian Alps. An elderly German in a Tyrolean hat was showing them the way. He sat with his hands on his knees in the back between two soldiers. The Bavarian was exaggeratedly polite and courteous, but it didn't bother the Americans. They had already grown used to Germans behaving that way.

"We're almost there, Herr Officer," the Bavarian said. "The house is around that bend."

"Is he alone there?" the American officer asked.

"I cannot say, Herr Officer. I didn't go in."

"What about weapons? Are there any weapons?"

"Forgive me, Herr Officer, but I do not know about that either."

The road finally ended at a one-story wooden house. The soldiers jumped out of the jeeps, spoke a few words in a low voice, and surrounded the house with their rifles ready.

No sounds came from the house. The officer made a sign and two soldiers knocked the door down and burst into the house. In the half-lit room a man lay on a wooden bed, bearded and dressed in civilian clothes. He was staring at the ceiling with dull eyes.

"Hands up! Drop weapons! Do you have any weapons?"

The bearded man rose with some difficulty and, struck with fear, held his hands up. Then he shook his head desperately. He was either afflicted by a nervous tick or suffering from a terrible hangover – the table and floor were covered with empty bottles.

"Did you manage all this yourself?" the officer smirked, distrustful of the man.

The bearded man continued to stare at him slack-jawed and with empty eyes. He seemed to simply not understand what the officer had asked.

"Is this him?" the American asked their Bavarian guide, nodding towards the bearded man.

"*Jawohl*, Herr Officer," the guide said. "It is the man himself."

The American officer turned towards the bearded figure. The hands of the man, who seemed to no longer be in command of his body, flopped down tiredly.

"Fine, you don't have to keep your hands up," the author pitied him. "Are you Dr. Robert Ley?"

The bearded man drunkenly shook his head.

"You have made some mistake."

"Some mistake? Who are you, then?"

"I am... Dr. Ernst Distelmeyer. You have made a mistake. I do not know any Dr. Ley!"

The officer turned to the guide. He straightened as if standing at attention.

"Don't trust him, Herr Officer! It's him, Dr. Ley! The same man... Aren't you ashamed of yourself, Dr. Ley? Show some courage!"

But the German only stupidly shook his head. "I am Dr. Distelmeyer. I have proof."

"OK, then," the American cut the pointless argument short. "You're a doctor. Come with us!"

"You have made a mistake, officer," the bearded man complained.

"Fine, we'll talk about it when you've sobered up."

At the headquarters of the American division, another officer now listened to the somewhat more sober but still insistent bearded man.

"You have made a mistake," he went on. "I have got proof. I am Dr. Distelmeyer. Why do you not believe me?"

"Because you're lying!" the American roared. "We've got every reason to believe that you are Robert Ley, head of the German Labor Front, director of the Central Inspectorate for Foreign Workers. One of the closest men to Hitler. The Führer had an especial trust in you!"

"There must be some horrible mistake. Horrible..."

"God," the American couldn't control himself, "and people like you had the whole world by the throat. You worm, you think you can trick us just like that? Your friend Himmler also had fake documents in the name of some Heinrich Hitzinger... The only difference between you two is that you decided to grow a beard and Himmler shaved off his ugly little mustache and wore a black eye patch. Do you really think such cheap tricks would save you from being found?"

"It is a mistake, a mistake." Ley muttered, rocking back and forth. "It's a very big mistake. A very big mistake."

"Oh well," the American said. He got up and opened the door to admit a neatly dressed elderly German who was holding his hat in his hand. Ley gaped at him and then turned away.

"Dr. Ley, you're here!" the old man cried. "What are you doing here?"

"That's a good question," the American officer laughed. "Our Dr. Ley is playing the fool. Who knows what he's hoping for. Allow me, Dr. Ley, to present Franz Schwartz, the former treasurer of the Nazi Party and someone you've known for many years. And on the other side of that door is his son, who you used to work with..."

Ley, muttering something, put his hand into his hands.

"Well, are you going to go on acting like this? Or should we end this farce? You're a general, you should act like it."

"Enough," Ley let out his breath. "Enough already. I'm really Dr. Ley..."

"That's better," the American said with contempt. "You're under arrest, Dr. Ley. US command will decide what to do with you. I'll give you some advice as I say goodbye, and when you finally sober up in prison, you should think very carefully about it. Soon you're going to be asked a lot of questions. Answer them honestly, those questions. Every single one. Stop fooling around and remember that your life is in our hands. We're the ones who decide what to do with it. You just have to answer our questions."

Notes

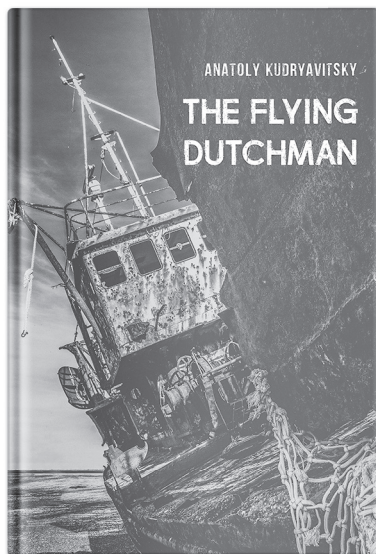
As Hector, a Soviet intelligence agent in the United States reports, a special team of doctors and scientists has been sent from the USA to Germany. Their task is to record carefully (without revealing their interests to the other Allies) and in detail everything related to SS and Gestapo doctors' experiments with mescaline, an extract from the peyote cactus. Experiments were conducted on prisoners, mainly Russians, in the Dachau concentration camp. The goal was to find a way of sapping willpower and paralyzing

the human mind in order to shift thinking in the right direction.

A dedicated Unit 19 was created in the United States which was to use the results obtained by the Germans to create various drugs that highly secret American agents could use outside the US. This meant special-purpose weapons: chemical, biological, and psychological means of influence.

The Flying Dutchman

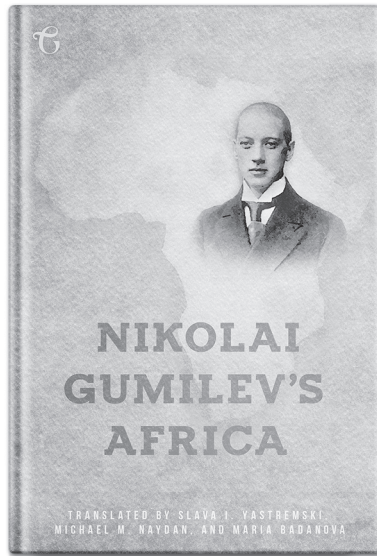
by Anatoly Kudryavitsky



Some time in the 1970s, Konstantin Alpheyeu, a well-known Russian musicologist, finds himself in trouble with the KGB, the Russian secret police, after the death of his girlfriend, for which one of their officers may have been responsible. He has to flee from the city and to go into hiding. He rents an old house located on the bank of a big Russian river, and lives there like a recluse observing nature and working on his new book about Wagner. The house, a part of an old barge, undergoes strange metamorphoses rebuilding itself as a medieval schooner, and Alpheyeu begins to identify himself with the Flying Dutchman. Meanwhile, the police locate his new whereabouts and put him under surveillance. A chain of strange events in the nearby village makes the police officer contact the KGB, and the latter figure out who the new tenant of the old house actually is.

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Nikolai Gumilev's Africa

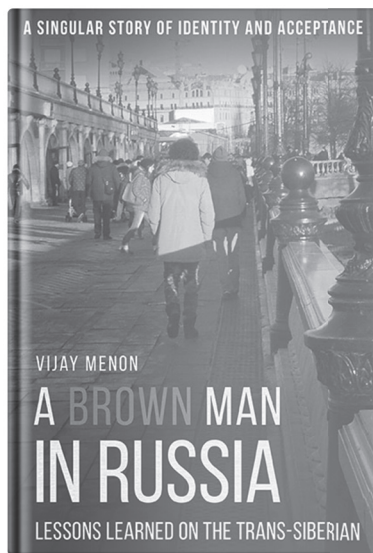


Gumilev holds a unique position in the history of Russian poetry as a result of his profound involvement with Africa. He extensively wrote both poetry and prose on the culture of the continent in general and on Ethiopia (Abyssinia, as it was called in Gumilev's time) in particular. During his abbreviated lifetime Gumilev made four trips to Northern and Eastern Africa, the most extensive of which was a 1913 expedition to Abyssinia undertaken on assignment from the St. Petersburg Imperial Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography. During that trip Gumilev collected Ethiopian folklore and ethnographic objects, which, upon his return to St. Petersburg, he deposited at the Museum. He and his assistant Nikolai Sverchkov also made more than 200 photographs that offer a unique picture of the African country in the early part of the century.

This volume collects all of Gumilev's poetry and prose written about Africa for the first time as well as a number of the photographs that he and Nikolai Sverchkov took during their trip that give a fascinating view of that part of the world in the early twentieth century.

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A Brown Man in Russia
Lessons Learned on the Trans-Siberian
by Vijay Menon



A Brown Man in Russia describes the fantastical travels of a young, colored American traveler as he backpacks across Russia in the middle of winter via the Trans-Siberian. The book is a hybrid between the curmudgeonly travelogues of Paul Theroux and the philosophical works of Robert Pirsig. Styled in the vein of Hofstadter, the author lays out a series of absurd, but true stories followed by a deeper rumination on what they mean and why they matter. Each chapter presents a vivid anecdote from the perspective of the fumbling traveler and concludes with a deeper lesson to be gleaned. For those who recognize the discordant nature of our world in a time ripe for demagoguery and for those who want to make it better, the book is an all too welcome antidote. It explores the current global climate of despair over differences and outputs a very different message – one of hope and shared understanding. At times surreal, at times inappropriate, at times hilarious, and at times deeply human, *A Brown Man in Russia* is a reminder to those who feel marginalized, hopeless, or endlessly divided that harmony is achievable even in the most unlikely of places.

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Postwar Nuremberg is set to host a historically unprecedented trial of the leaders of the defeated Third Reich. The whole world is awaiting a just verdict, but it is here where Soviet counterintelligence must wage a secret war against forces that seek to prevent that from happening at any cost. Nuremberg, having been nearly wiped from the face of the earth during the harsh fighting, becomes an arena for ruthless struggles in both hidden and overt operations. Nazis are still operating underground, spies weave their intrigues, politicians and diplomats make bargains, and movie stars dazzle the public. The enormous efforts led by the USSR's chief prosecutor Roman Rudenko to expose the Nazi atrocities are threatened.

It is here where counterintelligence officer Major Denis Rebrov must operate: he has been tasked with a matter of special state importance. But in this old imperial city, the ruins of which are home to people who would do anything for a pack of cigarettes or a loaf of bread, where revelations about unimaginable crimes come out daily, Rebrov meets Princess Irina Kurakina, born to an aristocratic family of Russian emigres.

The pages of this novel abound with real historical figures. Besides the USSR chief prosecutor Rudenko and his American analogue Robert Jackson, readers will be introduced to Nazi bosses Goering, Ribbentrop, Hess and Kaltenbrunner, film stars Olga Chekhov (Hitler's favorite actress) and Marlene Dietrich, as well as the "great leader" Stalin and his closest companions Molotov, Beria and Vyshinsky.

The Nuremberg Trials is based upon real facts that were hitherto unknown and details that the author, who spent many years studying the trials, learned from participants and witnesses.

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