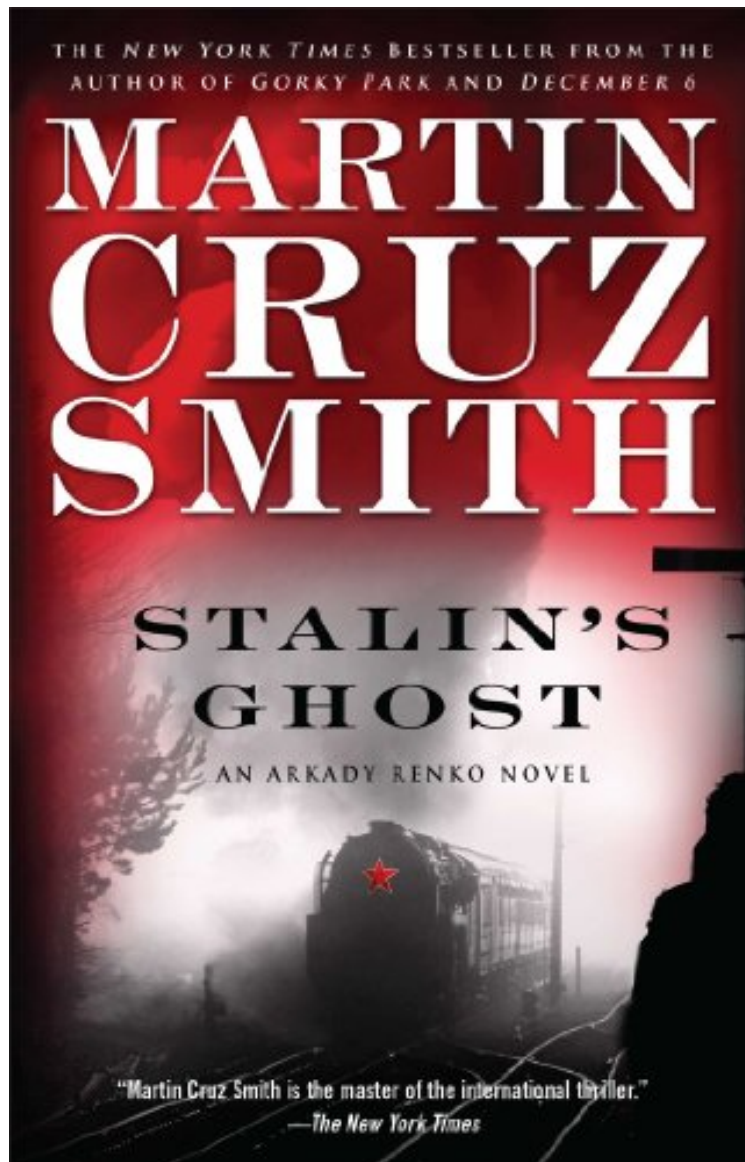


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Stalin's Ghost: An Arkady Renko Novel (Arkady Renko Series)

Von Martin Cruz Smith

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Von Martin Cruz Smith : Stalin's Ghost: An Arkady Renko Novel (Arkady Renko Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stalin's Ghost: An Arkady Renko Novel (Arkady Renko Series):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen4 von 4 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A Desperate Search for Integrity in the New Russia Amid the Crimes of the Old RussiaVon Donald MitchellStalin's Ghost is a real page turner. I could hardly put it down when my eyes grew heavy at 2 a.m. No one writes about Russia

like Martin Cruz Smith, and in *Stalin's Ghost* you will see past, present, and future of that volatile country combined in a marvelously powerful way. Arkady Renko is back in Moscow, but his life is at a low ebb. Renko's relationship with Eva (whom he met in *Wolves Eat Dogs*) is being destroyed as she's drawn into living with Detective Nikolai Isakov. Zhenya, Renko's surrogate son, has stopped coming home, and Renko can't find him. Prosecutor Zurin wants nothing to do with Renko: He has a terrible habit of investigating too much! Matters take an unexpected turn, however, when Victor accidentally picks up a phone call at the police station from a woman who wants to hire a hit on her husband. Could it be that the police are committing crimes and then covering their tracks through a cursory investigation? Soon, Arkady and Victor are meeting with the prospective client and getting the job. Out of nowhere, Zurin decides that Renko should take over the politically sensitive investigation of reported sightings of Josef Stalin in a subway station where he used to come during World War II air raids. On the way to the station, Renko stumbles on a building crew that finds a mass grave under Supreme Court. Where are all the bodies buried? Renko is surprised to find that his sexual rival, Isakov, is also involved in investigating the Stalin sighting . . . but seems to be doing a poor job of it. Following up with Isakov, Renko also finds that other investigations are going peculiarly. What's the agenda here? Gradually, we learn that Isakov is in a parliamentary race based on his reputation as a Russian hero during the second war in Chechnya. Naturally, Renko can't let it go at that and pursues the truth . . . no matter where it leads. In the process, he learns some important truths about Eva, Zhenya, Isakov, and Stalin. All roads lead backward in time to reveal those truths. Renko will be in mortal danger from remorseless killers throughout the story. You'll be haunted by his experience, I'm sure. The book is filled with wonderfully evocative metaphors for Renko's investigative work, usually presented in terms of digging up the past in some physical form or by digging through one's mind to employ old knowledge to solve current problems. The book literally drips in bloody looks into the dark infamy of Stalin and those who served him, including Renko's father. You'll get the idea that Stalin wasn't an exception in the Russian character, but rather an extreme expression of the desire to hold power and gain advantage at any cost. I found it hard to imagine how this book could have been plotted or developed any better. It's a remarkable thriller built around the imagery of a tiny light of goodness against the pervasive darkness of evil.

2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A Desperate Search for Integrity in the New Russia Amid the Crimes of the Old Russia Von Donald Mitchell

Stalin's Ghost is a real page turner. I could hardly put it down when my eyes grew heavy at 2 a.m. No one writes about Russia like Martin Cruz Smith, and in *Stalin's Ghost* you will see past, present, and future of that volatile country combined in a marvelously powerful way. Arkady Renko is back in Moscow, but his life is at a low ebb. Renko's relationship with Eva (whom he met in *Wolves Eat Dogs*) is being destroyed as she's drawn into living with Detective Nikolai Isakov. Zhenya, Renko's surrogate son, has stopped coming home, and Renko can't find him. Prosecutor Zurin wants nothing to do with Renko: He has a terrible habit of investigating too much! Matters take an unexpected turn, however, when Victor accidentally picks up a phone call at the police station from a woman who wants to hire a hit on her husband. Could it be that the police are committing crimes and then covering their tracks through a cursory investigation? Soon, Arkady and Victor are meeting with the prospective client and getting the job. Out of nowhere, Zurin decides that Renko should take over the politically sensitive investigation of reported sightings of Josef Stalin in a subway station where he used to come during World War II air raids. On the way to the station, Renko stumbles on a building crew that finds a mass grave under Supreme Court. Where are all the bodies buried? Renko is surprised to find that his sexual rival, Isakov, is also involved in investigating the Stalin sighting . . . but seems to be doing a poor job of it. Following up with Isakov, Renko also finds that other investigations are going peculiarly. What's the agenda here? Gradually, we learn that Isakov is in a parliamentary race based on his reputation as a Russian hero during the second war in Chechnya. Naturally, Renko can't let it go at that and pursues the truth . . . no matter where it leads. In the process, he learns some important truths about Eva, Zhenya, Isakov, and Stalin. All roads lead backward in time to reveal those truths. Renko will be in mortal danger from remorseless killers throughout the story. You'll be haunted by his experience, I'm sure. The book is filled with wonderfully evocative metaphors for Renko's investigative work, usually presented in terms of digging up the past in some physical form or by digging through one's mind to employ old knowledge to solve current problems. The book literally drips in bloody looks into the dark infamy of Stalin and those who served him, including Renko's father. You'll get the idea that Stalin wasn't an exception in the Russian character, but rather an extreme expression of the desire to hold power and gain advantage at any cost. I found it hard to imagine how this book could have been plotted or developed any better. It's a remarkable thriller built around the imagery of a tiny light of goodness against the pervasive darkness of evil.

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. The old Arkady Renko is back! Von Mark O'Neill

I was distinctly unimpressed with the last Renko book, "*Wolves Eat Dogs*" so I hesitated a long time before reading this book "*Stalin's Ghost*". But I have to admit that this book is MUCH better than the last one. In this one, the old Renko is back. His sarcasm and dry wit is back and the story is very enjoyable. In fact it made me think about reading "*Wolves Eat Dogs*" again to see if I have badly misjudged it. In this one, Renko is suffering from not being the favourite of the Moscow prosecutor, Zurin. He is getting all the scummy cases such as sightings of Josef Stalin on the Moscow subway. But he is also having run-ins with detectives Isakov and Urman whom he suspects are dirty and killers. His love life also sucks. His girlfriend Eva is acting weird and suddenly she leaves him for Detective Isakov which doesn't make him

feel any better. Plus where is Zhenya, the child chess prodigy? He never comes home these days....Suddenly the sightings of Stalin, the suspicions of Isakov and Urman being dirty and Eva being with Isakov converge violently. It takes Renko to the city of Tver where Isakov is running for political office, where people are digging up the bones of the war dead and where everyone is waiting for Stalin's ghost to appear.

Kurzbeschreibung Investigator Arkady Renko, the pariah of the Moscow prosecutor's office, has been assigned the thankless job of investigating a new phenomenon: late-night subway riders report seeing the ghost of Joseph Stalin on the platform of the Chistye Prudy Metro station. The illusion seems part political hocus-pocus and also part wishful thinking, for among many Russians Stalin is again popular; the bloody dictator can boast a two-to-one approval rating. Decidedly better than that of Renko, whose lover, Eva, has left him for Detective Nikolai Isakov, a charismatic veteran of the civil war in Chechnya, a hero of the far right and, Renko suspects, a killer for hire. The cases entwine, and Renko's quests become a personal inquiry fueled by jealousy. The investigation leads to the fields of Tver outside of Moscow, where once a million soldiers fought. There, amidst the detritus, Renko must confront the ghost of his own father, a favorite general of Stalin's. In these barren fields, patriots and shady entrepreneurs -- the Red Diggers and Black Diggers -- collect the bones, weapons and personal effects of slain World War II soldiers, and find that even among the dead there are surprises. From Publishers Weekly Starred . Moscow-based Senior Investigator Arkady Renko, in his outstanding sixth outing (after *Wolves Eat Dogs*), investigates a murder-for-hire scheme that leads him to suspect two fellow police detectives, Nikolai Isakov and Marat Urman, both former members of Russia's elite Black Berets, who served in Chechnya. Isakov, a war hero, is now running for public office. Renko must also look into reports that the ghost of Stalin has begun appearing on subway platforms and why several bodies of Black Berets who served in Chechnya with Isakov have turned up in the morgue. Despite repeated threats to his life, Renko stubbornly perseveres, seeking justice in a land that has no official notion of that concept. Smith eschews vertiginous twists and surprises, concentrating instead on Renko as he slowly and patiently builds his case until the pieces fall together and he has again, if not exactly triumphed, at least survived. This masterful suspense novel casts a searing light on contemporary Russia. 250,000 first printing. (June) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist * Starred * At the end of *Wolves Eat Dogs* (2005), it looked like Arkady Renko, the browbeaten Russian cop perpetually caught in the backdraft of history, had emerged from grayed-out Chernobyl with an uncontaminated shred of hope--a new relationship, perhaps even a reason for living. By the time we pick up the story, however, Renko is back in Moscow, the relationship is splintering, the teenager he had unofficially adopted is living on the streets, and his career is once again on the scrap heap. So it's only natural that the odd man out would land the case nobody wants: investigating the purported sightings of Joseph Stalin's ghost at a Moscow subway station. It's clear that the Stalin scam is being used by reactionaries as a way of fanning the "good old days" movement, but raining on the parade of a bunch of aging WWII vets reliving old glory has lose-lose all over it. Then Renko catches the scent of a bigger story behind Stalin's ghost--war crimes committed by the reactionaries' golden-boy politician--and follows it to remote Tver, where Smith unveils another of his unforgettable set pieces: the search for and exhumation of Russian soldiers massacred on the eastern front. From *Gorky Park* (1981) onward, this series has always been about the perils of digging: whether it's bodies under the snow or radioactive facts that the powerful want to keep hidden, the treasures that Renko seeks always contain the seeds of his own destruction. But somehow digging his own grave is what keeps Renko alive--and keeps us reading. Bill Ott Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved