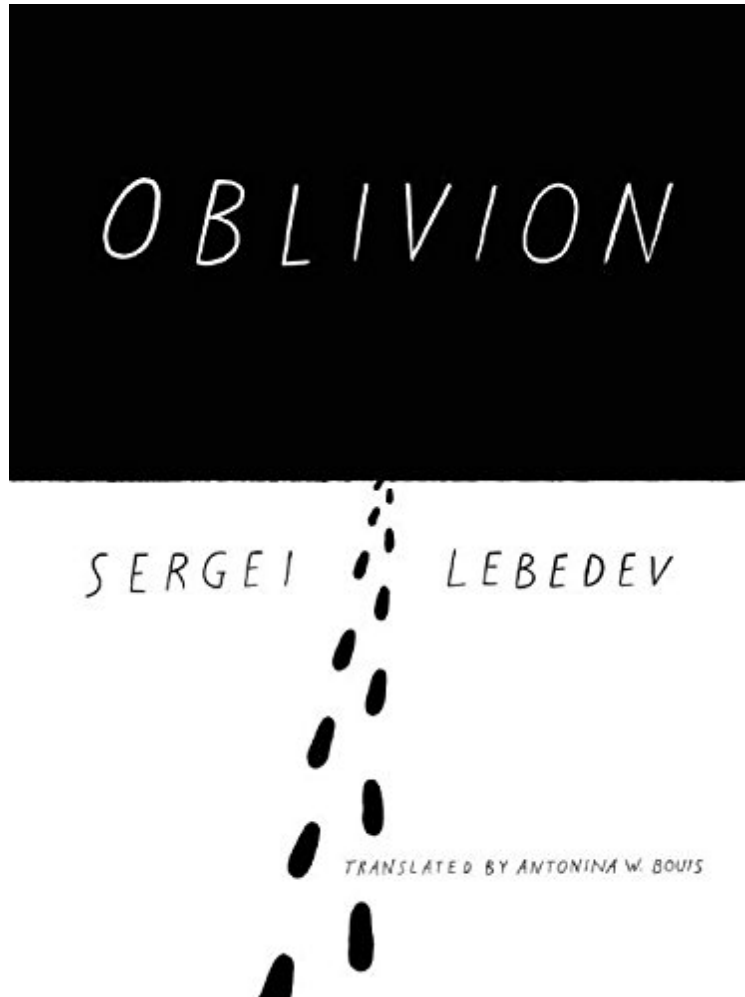


(Download) Oblivion

Oblivion

Sergei Lebedev

**Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#844673 in Books 2016-01-19Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 7.90 x .90 x 5.20l, .0 #File Name: 1939931258292 pages | File size: 64.Mb

Sergei Lebedev : Oblivion before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Oblivion:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A prolix writer of genius or tediumBy I'm Waiting for GodotMy view of this book differs from those who have previously posted. I love Chekhov, have read some Tolstoy and Turgenev, but I'm not an expert or maybe even a fan of Russian literature. My idea of a good time is Lydia Davis's translation of Proust, the first chapters of Joyce's Ulysses, and Virginia Woolf. So read this review with my prejudices in mind. This book is first and foremost an original work of art; I've read nothing like it before. But that doesn't mean I like it. I found the first 100 pages of this novel difficult to get through, alternating between thinking Lebedev was a genius or merely tedious. These pages were dense with language, sometimes abstract, often abstruse. I couldn't tell if the abstruseness was a result of the Russian language, the translation, or a personal vision drenched in the northern

landscape. The story gradually sinks into its own language, falls in love with it and drowns in it, and the author's natural bent for surrealism or dream imagery takes over. The last fifty pages were for me cold and repellent. To be fair, that's what the author wanted to produce. BELOW IS A PARODY OF MR. LEBEDEV'S STYLE--which some readers will object to. It is easy, they will say, to parody a writer than to create an original work of art. That's absolutely right. As I came closer to the pump house I saw that its contours were not fixed by its walls but by some kind of air, a compressed thickening of oxygen, a thousand attenuated sighs or ejaculations of surprise from those who were no longer there—perhaps never had been there—but who had left their essence behind in tracings that refined the boredom of an institution which had ceased to function and was only now allowing the dead to pursue their own ends, quietly, without guilt or joy, speaking of the water that in winter, in the deep aloneness of that place, flooded a dimly lit office where both the old stamps and the stamped documents had been archived as if in the dark gullet of the Stalinist bureaucracy, looked after by one old man whom I knew from the dacha, an apple grower who left the apples on the trees so that in autumn the thudding fruit fell onto the earth like iron, and our bones our very eyes were sluiced by the lost and forgotten past which rose like smoke from the glue factory. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Voltaire Astonishing insight the lived experience of 20th-century Russia. Deeply moving work. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A tough, demanding read. By david murray Harrowing. Unforgettable.

In one of the first twenty-first century Russian novels to probe the legacy of the Soviet prison camp system, a young man travels to the vast wastelands of the Far North to uncover the truth about a shadowy neighbor who saved his life, and whom he knows only as Grandfather II. What he finds, among the forgotten mines and decrepit barracks of former gulags, is a world relegated to oblivion, where it is easier to ignore both the victims and the executioners than to come to terms with a terrible past. This disturbing tale evokes the great and ruined beauty of a land where man and machine worked in tandem with nature to destroy millions of lives during the Soviet century. Emerging from today's Russia, where the ills of the past are being forcefully erased from public memory, this masterful novel represents an epic literary attempt to rescue history from the brink of oblivion. Sergei Lebedev was born in Moscow in 1981 and worked for seven years on geological expeditions in northern Russia and Central Asia. His first novel, *Oblivion*, has been translated into many languages.

From Publishers Weekly Lebedev's debut novel evokes, in powerful poetic prose, the Soviet prison work camps of the Arctic north, posing a heartfelt challenge to those who prefer to forget. Like the author, the novel's unnamed narrator is a Russian geologist with a passion for words. The story follows his attempt to uncover the past of an old blind neighbor he calls Grandfather II. No one knows much about Grandfather II, who keeps mostly to himself, his deep attachment to the narrator one notable exception. When, as a boy, the narrator balks at his first haircut, Grandfather II takes charge of the scissors. When the boy encounters a frothing dog, Grandfather II beats it with his cane. When the boy needs a transfusion, Grandfather II gives his blood. After Grandfather II dies, the narrator finds a letter that prompts a journey to Siberia, where he observes cold white expanses scarred by logged forests, used-up mines, deserted barracks, neglected roads, abandoned vehicles. Grandfather II's past is rooted in this landscape: he played a key role at a prison camp quarry. The narrator facing the facts of Grandpa II's life serves as a metaphor for Russians dealing with their sullied heritage. The determination of Kulak laborers, the desperation of a fugitive prisoner, the desolation of an empty library, the tragedy of a boy and his whistle, are among the many images capturing the impoverished state of the land, the people, and the national spirit, left by an unjust and undeniable part of Russian history. (Jan.)\n Wall Street Journal Top 10 Novel of 2016 and 2017 Best Translated Book Award finalist "A Dantean descent ... In a steely translation by Antonina W. Bouis, *Oblivion* is as cold and stark as a glacial crevasse, but as beautiful as one, too, with a clear poetic sensibility built to stand against the forces of erasure."—The Wall Street Journal "Astonishing ... ingeniously structured around the progressive uncovering of memories of a difficult personal and national past ... with a visceral, at times almost unbearable, force."—The Times Literary Supplement "Opening in stately fashion and unfolding ever faster with fierce, intensive elegance, this first novel discloses the weight of Soviet history and its consequences. ... Highly recommended for anyone serious about literature or history."—Library Journal (Starred review) "Packs a wicked emotional punch through fierce poetic imagery ... Lebedev takes his place beside Solzhenitsyn and other great writers who have refused to abide by silence ... Courageous and devastating."—Kirkus (Starred review) "Oblivion is like a detective story ... A shattering novel ... Its true subject matter is Russia's present, not its past."—Words without Borders "A key novel for understanding today's Russia ... Low in sentimentalism but high in feeling ... it rewards in rich surprises."—The Globe and Mail "An important book about where Russia is today, with poetic descriptions and unforgettable images evoking that nation's often elusive attempts to understand its dark past. I stand in awe of both the author and translator."—Jack F. Matlock, Jr, former US Ambassador to the Soviet Union "The subject matter of *Oblivion* is the eerie frozen landscape scattered with the human detritus of an inhuman bygone era. What brings it back from oblivion is the author's exceptional power of language. A haunting read."—Michael Zantovsky, former press secretary to Czech President Vaclav Havel, author of *Havel: A Life* and former Czech Ambassador to the United States, Israel and Britain "Beautifully written, haunting and unputdownable.

A masterpiece novel."—Edward Lucas, senior editor, *The Economist* and author of *The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West*"The sheer poetry of its prose is enough to keep you hooked ... an arresting work of art."—BookBrowse"Sergei Lebedev's debut novel is a haunting tale about the loss of national memory and its moral consequences for the individual. The brilliant translation by Antonina W. Bouis captures the evocative beauty of the poetic first-person narration and renders it into memorable English."—Solomon Volkov, author of *Shostakovich and Stalin*, *St. Petersburg: A Cultural History*, and *The Magical Chorus: A History of Russian Culture from Tolstoy to Solzhenitsyn*"Pushes poetic language to the edge ... astonishing ... This book's quiet anger is well-timed."—Maclean's"An extraordinary book that takes readers across Russia's desolate northern landscape and turns up secrets about the terrible legacy of the Soviet gulags, described through evocative, often poetic portraits of people and places."—Celestine Bohlen, International New York Times columnist and former Moscow correspondent for *The New York Times*"A monomaniacal meditation on memory and forgetting, presence and emptiness ... Lebedev's magnificent novel has the potency to become a mirror and wake-up call to a Russia that is blind to history."—*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*"Sergei Lebedev opens up new territory in literature. Lebedev's prose lives from the precise images and the author's colossal gift of observation."—*Der Spiegel*"The beauty of the language is almost impossible to bear."—*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*