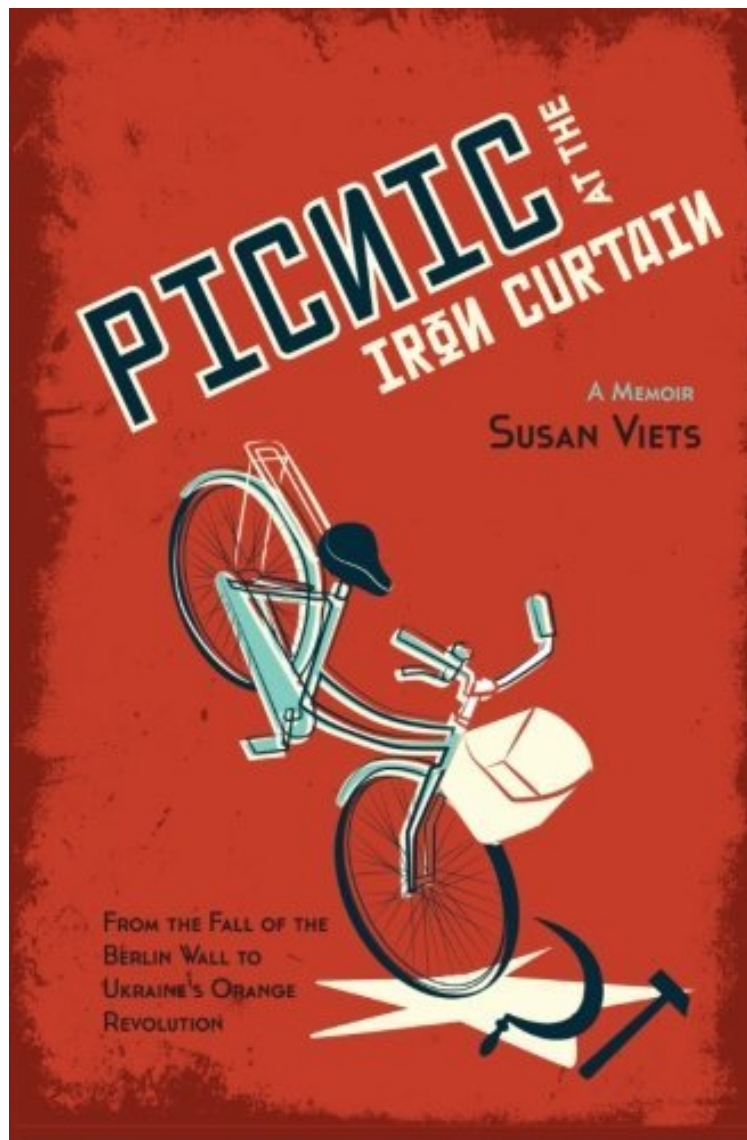


(Free pdf) Picnic at the Iron Curtain: A Memoir: From the fall of the Berlin Wall to Ukraine's Orange Revolution

## Picnic at the Iron Curtain: A Memoir: From the fall of the Berlin Wall to Ukraine's Orange Revolution

*Susan Viets*

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#3163628 in Books Susan Viets 2012-08-12Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.00 x .69 x 5.251, .70 #File Name: 0987966405276 pagesPicnic at the Iron Curtain | File size: 73.Mb

**Susan Viets : Picnic at the Iron Curtain: A Memoir: From the fall of the Berlin Wall to Ukraine's Orange Revolution** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Picnic at the Iron Curtain: A Memoir: From the fall of the Berlin Wall to Ukraine's Orange Revolution:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A peek from the other sideBy Kindle CustomerI thoroughly enjoyed

this book. It is well written (good thing since the author was a journalist) and it gave me new insights on life behind the iron curtain. I remember all of the events she discusses, and her perspective (unfiltered by the American media) was refreshing. She gives a fascinating peek at daily life and times under harsh dictatorships and war, and lays bare the risks people were willing to take either get out or affect changes. I have several friends from the former Eastern Bloc and now have at least a little bit of a better insight into their various experiences. Ms. Viets' story starts out in London, with the presentation of an opportunity. Then moves to Hungary, where she witnesses a mass exodus of East Germans to Austria just before the border rules changed. Next she moves to Kiev while it is still a part of the USSR. So she has the opportunity to know that city, and the Ukraine quite well, and thus be in a position to fully appreciate the changes that took place after the collapse of the Soviet Union. During this period, she has the chance to see Chernobyl, visit the abandoned city, and meet some villagers in a seemingly idyllic place. She also managed to get to Chechnya during this time so we get a peek at what was happening there. Ms. Viets also spends time in Sarajevo during the war, and is able to return to Kiev for the Orange Revolution. While the political events themselves are interesting, it's the relationships she has with the local people and her daily interactions that provide the most interesting context for the events she describes. Ms. Viets was very lucky, in my mind, to have been able to live and travel in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, especially at such a pivotal time in history. She sets a great example of exploiting an opportunity, adapting to different world-views and maneuvering through oppressive bureaucracies. I recommend this book! You might ask why only four stars if I liked it so much. I personally reserve the five stars for those books that are above and beyond. 32 of 34 people found the following review helpful. Gripping and inspiring By Judith Greenwood I was so affected by this book that I leaped out of bed and went outside. I stared at the stars and thought what have I done with my life, why have I never taken those kinds of plunges, and is there still time to be everything I have the strength for? The writing is sublime, the stories fascinating and the character Ms Viets reveals challenges us to be more, dare more, and make a run for it. Buy this book. Read this book. It's better than the gym, better than dinner out, better than almost anything you might have done with the time and money. I consider it a life-changing book and I plan to read it again and then get ready to fly. If she publishes another book, I'll be the first in line. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting enough By Customer Found myself often asking what was she thinking? The author put herself in so many situations from which others would be moving away. Heading into a new area, hear there is fighting on a large scale, the driver refuses to go further, do they turn around? Oh no, well WE haven't seen any fighting (spoiler, there WAS fighting). It was interesting enough for me to keep reading but I just couldn't understand where her head was. A line about 3/4 of the way through seemed to sum it up - "I thrived in environments like this..." "I do not thrive in environments like this, I prefer things relatively safe, no one shooting guns on a daily basis. As far as the historical aspect it was interesting but a bit over long.

Picnic at the Iron Curtain won a 2013 Next Generation Indie Book Awards finalist's award. It is also a 2012 Foreword's Book of the Year Award finalist and received an honorable mention at the 2013 San Francisco Book Festival. Welcome to the world of collapsing Communism. It is the eve of the fall of the Berlin Wall when people are still willing to risk all to cross the Iron Curtain to the West. In this adventure-packed memoir Susan Viets, a student turned journalist, arrives in Communist Hungary in 1988 and begins reporting for the Guardian, not at all prepared for what lies ahead. She helps East Germans escape to the West at a picnic, moves to the Soviet Union where she battles authorities for accreditation as the first foreign journalist in Ukraine and then watches, amazed, as the entire political system collapses. Lured by new travel opportunities, Viets shops her way across Central Asia, stumbling into a tank attack in Tajikistan and the start of the Tajik civil war. "Picnic at the Iron Curtain" shows every day people at the centre of dramatic events from Budapest to Bishkek and Chernobyl to Chechnya. It is a memoir that spans a period of momentous historical change from 1988-1998, following through with an eyewitness account of Ukraine's Orange Revolution in 2004.

About the Author Susan Viets reported for the Guardian, the Independent, and BBC World. She has also contributed to CBC, Newsweek, USA Today, the Moscow Times and other publications. She lives with her husband in Toronto.