



Devil's Midnight

Yuri Kapralov

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“Startling, eloquent. . . . The story of the Russian Revolution has been told many times but perhaps never before from Kapralov’s phantasmagorical vantage point.”—*Library Journal*

“Kapralov is reminiscent of fellow slav Nicolai Gogol.”—*New York Post*

August 1919 - February 1920. The Red Army is making its final, triumphant surge across the tortured remains of the old Russian Empire. For the defiantly apolitical artists and aesthetes at the heart of *Devil's Midnight*, it is a time of disruption and apocalypse, their lives pulled between narrow escapes, desperate intimacy, and horrific violence.

There's Alexey Lebedev, the son of a celebrated Russian painter recently martyred by the Bolsheviks, who is driven deep into the conflict by a dizzying spiral of chance encounters and impulsive decisions. There's Colonel Yuri Skatchko, a former stage director who has abandoned the theater to serve as the brave but reckless commander of "Our Homeland," a battered ammunition train that comes to represent, both symbolically and literally, the last hope of the White resistance. And there's the glamorous and seductive Nata Tai, the former queen of Russian cinema, who is busy waging her own private war with the ruthless remnants of a notorious satanic cabal.

Kapralov depicts the desperate struggles of his characters—Yuri's stubborn military resistance, Nata's fanatical commitment to guard the mysterious powers of a sacred meteorite, and Alexey's struggles simply to survive—with a perfect balance of intensity and nonchalance. In the end, the conflicts, both personal and political, converge toward a final showdown in the frozen shadows of the Caucasus, with Russia herself surviving as the novel's real hero, a place of darkness and mystery and hope.

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