

Icon

By Frederick Forsyth

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From the master of the novel of international intrigue comes a riveting new book as timely and unsettling as tomorrow's headlines.

It is summer 1999 in Russia, a country on the threshold of anarchy. An interim president sits powerless in Moscow as his nation is wracked by famine and inflation, crime and corruption, and seething hordes of the unemployed roam the streets.

For the West, Russia is a basket case. But for Igor Komarov, one-time army sergeant who has risen to leadership of the right-wing UPF party, the chaos is made to order. As he waits in the wings for the presidential election of January 2000, his striking voice rings out over the airwaves offering the roiling masses hope at last--not only for law, order, and prosperity, but for restoring the lost greatness of their land.

Who is this man with the golden tongue who is so quickly becoming the promise of a Russia reborn? A document stolen from party headquarters and smuggled to Washington and London sends nightmare chills through those who remember the past, for this Black Manifesto is pure *Mein Kampf* in a country with frightening parallels to the Germany of the Weimar Republic.

Officially the West can do nothing, but in secret a group of elder statesmen sends the only person who can expose the truth about Komarov into the heart of the inferno. Jason Monk, ex-CIA and "the best damn agent-runner we ever had," had sworn he would never return to Moscow, but one name changes his mind. Colonel Anatoli Grishin, the KGB officer who tortured and murdered four of Monk's agents after they had been betrayed by Aldrich Ames, is now Komarov's head of security.

Monk has a dual mission: to stop Komarov, whatever it takes, and to prepare the way for an icon worthy of the Russian people. But he has a personal mission as well: to settle the final score with Grishin. To do this he must stay alive--and the forces allied against him are ruthless, the time frighteningly short....

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Trapped in a snowbound cabin or on a long flight, there's nobody more reliable than Forsyth for guaranteed diversion. His narrative engine is one of the best in the business; his characters spring quickly to life; he blends research and imagination into high drama. **Icon** is set in the Russia of 1999, where an ultra-nationalist zealot you might recognize from *Nightline* is about to become head of state. When his dangerous agenda leaks out, no Western government wants to take action -- so a private task force including ex-CIA agent Jason Monk is sent in to derail the demagogue. It's all in the grand tradition of previous Forsythe winners, from The Day of the Jackal, The Odessa File and The Dogs of War through The Fourth Protocol and The Deceiver.

From Publishers Weekly
While for sheer reading excitement Forsyth has yet to top his fiction debut, Day of the Jackal, published a quarter century ago, his later novels (The Fist of God, etc.) display a mature mastery of storytelling melded with a deep knowledge of realpolitik. Here, contemporary Russian crypto-fascists prove every bit as villainous as their Communist predecessors whom Forsyth portrayed in The Fourth Protocol and The Deceiver. It's 1999, and ultra-nationalist Igor Komarov's victory in the upcoming Russian presidential election seems assured. But within Komarov's party headquarters, an elderly janitor accidentally discovers Komarov's secret plans for Russia, laid out in a document that comes to be known as the Black Manifesto?a blueprint for a return to dictatorship, military expansionism and genocidal ethnic cleansing. The manifesto soon comes to the attention of British intelligence, but both they and the CIA are restrained by their governments from taking official action. So with the backing of an organization of international VIPs, former British Secret Service chief Sir Nigel Irvine mounts his own covert operation to subvert Komarov. Ex-CIA operative Jason Monk, who once ran highly placed agents in the Soviet Union, will be Irvine's point man. As usual, Forsyth interweaves speculation with historical fact, stitching his plot pieces with a cogent analysis of both Russian politics and the world of espionage?particularly the legacy of the real-life Aldrich Ames, a Soviet mole who tunneled deep into the CIA. Shifting back and forth in time and space among a large cast of characters, Forsyth expertly builds suspense toward a climactic New Year's Eve skirmish in Moscow. It's another strong performance by a writer who knows exactly what he's about, and who here catalyzes narrative with another memorable protagonist, the stealthy and daring Monk. Major ad/promo; BOMC main selection.
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From School Library Journal
YA. This complex spy novel opens in the summer of 1999 in a Russia on the brink of economic and political ruin as its elected President dies. Information leaks to the West indicating that his probable successor, Komarov, is a bigot who makes Hitler seem tame. Alternating sections take readers back to 1983 to give necessary background and introduce the hero, Jason Monk, before resuming the primary plot. Monk works for the CIA and has been hired to stop the election of Komarov. Many of his efforts are hampered by Aldrich Ames, a Russian spy who worked in the CIA and eliminated those who might have helped Monk in 1999. The use of actual political leaders and spies makes for an engaging blend of truth and fiction. In spite of the novel's length, Forsyth is adept at reviewing both past events and identifying characters within the plot while providing a good description of the problems of contemporary Russia. Even though readers know that Monk will be successful, the epilogue holds final, creative surprises. An intriguing story of espionage.?Claudia Moore, W. T. Woodson High School, Fairfax, VA
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Elsie Canada:

Have you spare time to get a day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity with regard to spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to the particular Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book entitled Icon? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You recognize beside you can spend your time together with your favorite's book, you can smarter than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have various other opinion?

Katherine Sorenson:

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John McKeever:

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