

Cafe Europa Life After Communism Hardcover

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europe is still a divided continent in the place of a fallen berlin wall there is a chasm between the east and the west are these differences a communist legacy or do they run even deeper what divides us today to say simply that it is the understanding of the past or a different concept of time is not enough but a visitor to this part of the world will soon discover that we the eastern europeans live in another time zone we live in the twentieth century but at the same time we inhabit a past full of myths and fairy tales of blood and national belonging and the fact that most people are lying and cheating or that they have the habit of blaming others for every failure an intimate tour of life on the streets of budapest tirana warsaw and zagreb as those cities continue to acclimatise to the post communist thaw café europa does not provide easy solutions or furnish political pallatives

rather as a croatian with a viewpoint of ever widening relevance the value of slavenka drakulic s wry and humane observations lie in the emotional force of their honesty and the clarity of their insight

through ethnographic essays and short stories based on her experiences in eastern europe between 1989 and 2009 kristen ghodsee explains why many eastern europeans are nostalgic for the communist past

1972 nixon running for reelection watergate still a third rate burglary vietnam raging the dissident left moving toward violence in san francisco a maoist organization makes plans to break a murderer out of prison a splinter group descends into the nether world of conspiracy and perhaps assassination a radical professor fights for his job at stanford university and king tyler a left wing lawyer finds himself at a crossroads in his life an intersection of crises involving his wife his father and his politics from these materials max crawford has made a rich and important novel a book that is at once riveting in its suspense and absolutely authentic in its evocation of the recent american past the novel of his generation king tyler though more and more estranged from the revolutionary army has agreed to let the escaped prisoner use his cabin in the hills around palo alto when a guard is killed during the escape however king finds that his role in events can no longer be that of a sympathetic bystander he finds himself drawn into an entangling thicket of duty and fear his marital problems and his sister in law s involvement in the escape the deteriorating psychological state of the prisoner whom he is harboring the persistent rumors that one of the radicals is an fbi informer the increasingly ugly feuding among radical factions and king s own complex relationship with his father himself a communist in the 1930s the bad communist ranges widely over the political and geographical landscape of california in the early 1970s and it traverses too the extraordinary span of man s relationship to his fellows and his ideas for king tyler is caught between conflicting nations of duty to the law and to his friends between his obligations to himself and to his politics and between the forces of history and his own privacy in the bad communist max crawford whose first two novels brought him wide recognition as one of the most exciting new writers in america has written his best book a complex and absorbing novel a thriller that is also authentic in history jacket

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