



Child 44 (The Child 44 Trilogy)

By Tom Rob Smith

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SOON TO BE A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE *In a country ruled by fear, no one is innocent.*

Stalin's Soviet Union is an official paradise, where citizens live free from crime and fear only one thing: the all-powerful state. Defending this system is idealistic security officer Leo Demidov, a war hero who believes in the iron fist of the law. But when a murderer starts to kill at will and Leo dares to investigate, the State's obedient servant finds himself demoted and exiled. Now, with only his wife at his side, Leo must fight to uncover shocking truths about a killer-and a country where "crime" doesn't exist.

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Child 44 (The Child 44 Trilogy) By Tom Rob Smith Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

If all that Tom Rob Smith had done was to re-create Stalinist Russia, with all its double-speak hypocrisy, he would have written a worthwhile novel. He did so much more than that in *Child 44*, a frightening, chilling, almost unbelievable horror story about the very worst that Stalin's henchmen could manage. In this worker's paradise, superior in every way to the decadent West, the citizen's needs are met: health care, food, shelter, security. All one must offer in exchange are work and loyalty to the State. Leo Demidov is a believer, a former war hero who loves his country and wants only to serve it well. He puts contradictions out of his mind and carries on. Until something happens that he cannot ignore. A serial killer of children is on the loose, and the State cannot admit it.

To admit that such a murderer is committing these crimes is itself a crime against the State. Instead of coming to terms with it, the State's official position is that it is merely coincidental that children have been found dead, perhaps from accidents near the railroad tracks, perhaps from a person deemed insane, or, worse still, homosexual. But why does each victim have his or her stomach excised, a string around the ankle, and a mouth full of dirt? Coincidence? Leo, in disgrace and exiled to a country village, doesn't think so. How can he prove it when he is being pursued like a common criminal himself? He and his wife, Raisa, set out to find the killer. The revelations that follow are jaw-dropping and the suspense doesn't let up. This is a debut novel worth reading. --Valerie Ryan

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Dennis Boutsikaris expertly conveys the fear and paranoia that permeates Smith's outstanding debut novel of murder in 1950s Stalinist Russia. Leo Demidov, decorated hero of WWII and an officer in Moscow's MGB (a forerunner of the KGB), refuses to denounce his wife as an enemy spy. He is subsequently demoted, disgraced and dispatched, along with his wife, to a backwater factory. A brutal murder with the same characteristics as one Leo was once forced to cover up convinces him that a serial killer is stalking Russian children. Using Russian accents to their full advantage, Boutsikaris infuses his characters' dialogue with a deep sense of downtrodden melancholia. His staid, deliberate reading captures the soul-numbing oppressiveness of life under a totalitarian regime, as well as one man's desperate fight against it in order to do what's right. A *Grand Central* hardcover (Reviews, Mar. 3). (May)

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review In the workers' paradise of Stalin's Russia, crime cannot exist. Loyal, hardworking citizens will have all their needs met by the state, making crime unnecessary. The one exception is political crime, and MGB (State Security) officer Leo Demidov works long hours arresting people and delivering them to dreaded Lubyanka Prison. Deeply patriotic, but covetous of the perks of his position, Leo knows that many of the people he arrests are innocent, and he knows that he could suffer a similar fate. He does, almost, when office politics, MGB style, dictate his transfer to the lowly militia in a small city hundreds of miles east of Moscow. There he discovers that a serial killer is preying on children in cities along the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Having lost almost everything, Leo seeks redemption by hunting the killer, but his effort makes him a high-profile enemy of the state (acknowledging that a serial killer could exist in the USSR is tantamount to treason). *Child 44* powerfully personalizes the Orwellian horrors of life in Stalin's Russia. Almost every page echoes Hobbes' description of the life of man: "nasty, brutish, and short." First-novelist Smith's pacing is relentless; readers wanting to put the book down for a brief rest may find themselves persevering regardless. Expect the same kind of critical acclaim for this compelling tale that greeted the

publication of Martin Cruz Smith's Gorky Park (1981) more than 25 years ago. Like most first novels, Smith's debut isn't perfect, but it's a very, very good read. Don't miss it. --Thomas Gaughan

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Walter Berry:

This Child 44 (The Child 44 Trilogy) book is just not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is definitely information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper a person read a lot of information you will get. This Child 44 (The Child 44 Trilogy) without we recognize teach the one who looking at it become critical in contemplating and analyzing. Don't be worry Child 44 (The Child 44 Trilogy) can bring any time you are and not make your carrier space or bookshelves' turn out to be full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even cell phone. This Child 44 (The Child 44 Trilogy) having good arrangement in word in addition to layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

Nichelle Shive:

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Wm Dunlap:

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