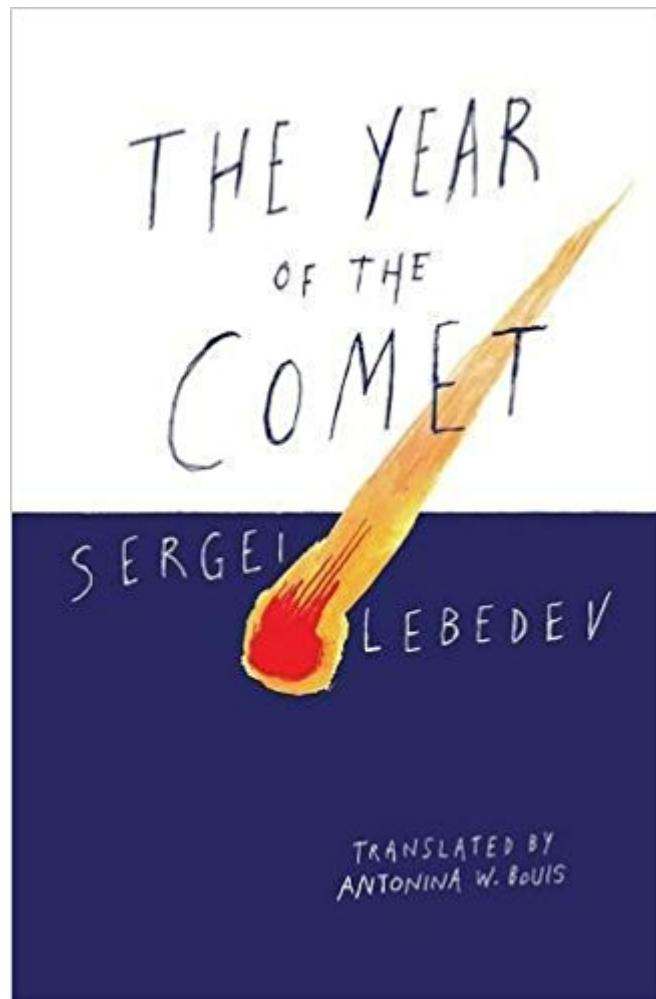


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# The Year Of The Comet



## Synopsis

"You read and reread Lebedev's lyrical, cutting prose with equal amounts of awe and enjoyment. This gorgeously written, unsettling novel—a rare work about the fall of the Soviet Union as told through the eyes of a child—leaves us with a fresh understanding of that towering moment in recent history."—Kirkus Reviews (Starred Review) From the critically acclaimed author of *Oblivion* comes *Year of the Comet*, a story of a Russian boyhood and coming of age as the Soviet Union is on the brink of collapse. An idyllic childhood takes a sinister turn. Rumors of a serial killer haunt the neighborhood, families pack up and leave town without a word of warning, and the country begins to unravel. Policemen stand by as protesters overtake the streets, knowing that the once awe-inspiring symbols of power they wear on their helmets have become devoid of meaning. Lebedev depicts a vast empire coming apart at the seams, transforming a very public moment into something tender and personal, and writes with stunning beauty and shattering insight about childhood and the growing consciousness of a boy in the world. Sergei Lebedev was born in Moscow in 1981 and worked for seven years on geological expeditions in Russia and Central Asia. Lebedev is a poet, essayist and journalist. *Oblivion*, his first novel, was published in 2016 by New Vessel Press, to great acclaim.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Sergei Lebedev writes about our failure to understand the Stalinist era and to see that Russia is today a country torn into pieces. Lebedev’s characters seek ways to cut the umbilical cord with the past.”—Svetlana Alexievich, 2015 winner of the Nobel Prize in

Literature"Examines the psychological trauma Stalinism continues to unleash" • even on those who never lived during his reign ... Antonina W. Bouis has translated the best of Soviet and post-Soviet writings ... and the ease with which she renders Mr. Lebedev's prose creates the illusion that both his novels were originally written in English." • The Wall Street Journal" You read and reread Lebedev's lyrical, cutting prose with equal amounts of awe and enjoyment. This gorgeously written, unsettling novel • a rare work about the fall of the Soviet Union as told through the eyes of a child • leaves us with a fresh understanding of that towering moment in recent history." • Kirkus Reviews (Starred Review)" Arrives like a brilliant meteoric streak to illuminate the intricacies of Russian national identity and the cataclysmic fall of the Soviet Union ... Poetic and penetrating, and demonstrating an incredible talent for nuance and paradox ... One of the best books of the year, and may be one of the best novels to come out of Russia in a generation." • Shelf Awareness (Starred Review)" Depicts objects in a stunningly, almost freakishly precise way, coaxing the metaphysical to express itself through the material ... In The Year of the Comet, coming of age is not about first love, or the discovery of sexuality, it is rather about the fatefulness of action." • The Times Literary Supplement" Gorgeously written ... leaves readers with a new insight into a towering moment in modern history." • The Winnipeg Free Press" The work of an extremely talented writer whose prose is spare and exact and has an authenticity that marks him as the real thing." • The Arts Fuse" Absorbing ... A seamlessly written child's-eye view that conveys an adult understanding of history's burdens." • Library Journal (Starred Review)" A remarkable bildungsroman ... a smart, convincing novel." • Publishers Weekly" Sergei Lebedev, now a confirmed new Russian literary star, masterfully proceeds with his work." • Le Figaro littérature" Praise for Sergei Lebedev's previous novel Oblivion" • "A clear poetic sensibility built to stand against the forces of erasure." • The Wall Street Journal" Beautifully written, haunting and unputdownable. A masterpiece novel." • Edward Lucas, senior editor, The Economist

Sergei Lebedev was born in Moscow in 1981 and worked for seven years on geological expeditions in northern Russia and Central Asia. Lebedev is a poet, essayist and journalist. Oblivion, his first novel, has been translated into many languages, and was published in English by New Vessel Press. Antonina W. Bouis is one of the leading translators of Russian literature working today. She has translated over 80 works from authors such as Evgeny Yevtushenko, Mikhail Bulgakov, Andrei Sakharov, Sergei Dovlatov and Arkady and Boris Strugatsky. Bouis, previously executive director of

the Soros Foundation in the former USSR, now lives in New York City.

Lebedev is a young, brilliant writer who immerses his readers into the traumatized memories of Russians in the 1917 Revolution, the times of Stalin, the savagery of the Great Patriotic War and the enduring impact on even Russian borns in the 1980's. Antonina Bouis's translation from Russian is a work of high art.

Gorgeous writing. Incisive observations. Fascinating to consider how a young Russian writer today evaluates Soviet history and its ongoing reverberations. I loved his earlier book *Oblivion* as well. From a purely literary perspective, Lebedev is an author who deserves a world-wide readership.

This follow up to Lebedev's first novel did not disappoint. Lebedev has such power of language, every page is like walking into a house where behind every corner, underneath every table, there's a surprise, something gorgeous, terrifying, frightening, or thoughtful. I have read both of his books (his first book, *Oblivion*, was a favorite of The Wall Street Journal in 2016) and I'm hoping there'll be more.

Waiting for a version on Kindle. Too expensive; no more room on my shelves.

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