



## Y.T.

By Alexei Nikitin

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**Y.T. By Alexei Nikitin**

**“I did remember: Whenever we moved our troops, advanced or retreated, we had written ‘your turn,’ usually just ‘Y.T.,’ to confirm that we’d made our final decision . . . Looking at the letters now, I felt something in the world change forever.”**

Ukraine, 1984. The Soviet Union is creaking toward collapse, and a group of bored radiophysics students devise a strategy game to keep themselves entertained. But war games are no joke, and no sooner does their game get underway than the KGB pulls the students in for questioning. Eventually they’re released, but they remain marked men.

Twenty years later, capitalism is in full swing when one member of the group, Davidov, receives an e-mail with a familiar ultimatum attached, signed, eerily, “Y.T.” Someone has revived the game, but it’s not any of his friends from the university . . . and the consequences now feel more real than ever.

The first English-language publication of a major Russian novelist, *Y.T.* follows an innocent-seeming game to its darkest places, and the result is a disturbing vision of war and tyranny. *Y.T.* is a wildly inventive novel that explores the banality deep in the heart of a paranoid totalitarian state.

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## **Y.T. By Alexei Nikitin Bibliography**

- Rank: #605645 in Books
- Published on: 2016-04-12
- Released on: 2016-04-12
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.20" h x .40" w x 5.50" l, .81 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 144 pages

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"The mystery plot...comes to a sublime anticlimax...a gritty, jaded depiction of post-1989 Ukraine." —**Sam Sacks, *Wall Street Journal***

"The story—at times hauntingly evocative...is held together by the narrator's nuanced character." —***The New Yorker***

"*Y.T.* is gripping, sardonic and elegantly written." —**BBC.com**

"Encapsulates a multitude of Ukraines...*Y.T.* questions how much change a few decades, or even centuries, of war and revolution can ever really bring...Nikitin's Kiev is a city on a hill littered with nostalgia, enjoying a tenuous, tedious peace." —***Times Literary Supplement***

"[A] tense and melancholic novel of trust betrayed." —***Publishers Weekly***

"[A] tightly-drawn novella with a novel's breathing room for reflection and reminiscence...The real story is about a loss of life, how individuals are pawns of larger institutions, and how fate arbitrarily manipulates both." —***Ploughshares Blog***

"The kind of novel in which conspiracies and mysteries overlap...and bizarre theories are...given the potential to roar into unexpected life." —**Tor.com**

"Nikitin is an incisive social critic...Stands as an indictment against corruption and false promises, wherever they occur." —***Asymptote***

"A little Jonathan Swift, a little Will Rogers...Bitter and funny." —***Cleaver Magazine***

"Hilarious elements of surrealism blunted by the banality of Soviet bureaucracy still lingering in 1980s Ukraine." —***Hedgehog Review***

"*Y.T.* ...captures with nuance the psychology of someone who has lived through the shift from an authoritarian state to a democratic one... funny, sad, thought-provoking, and satirical...the novel takes on an almost Pynchonian chaos." —***Chicago Review of Books***

"[A] wide-ranging look at life in Ukraine in recent decades." —***The Complete Review***

#### About the Author

ALEXEI NIKITIN was born in Ukraine, USSR, in 1967. He studied physics at Kiev University, spent time in the army, and worked in the gas and nuclear industries—including devising an emergency system for suppressing dust contamination from the Chernobyl sarcophagus. He is a winner of the Ukrainian Writers' Union Korolenko Prize and has published many novels and novellas. *Y.T.* is his first work to be translated into English.

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