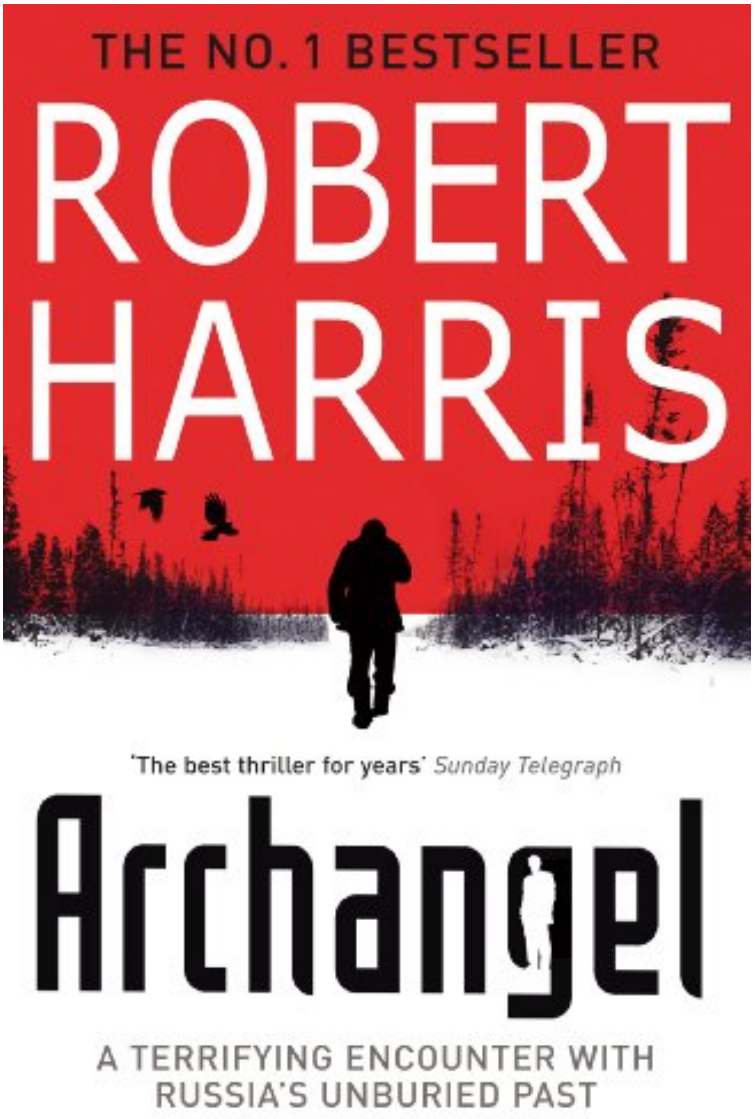
Archangel



Par Robert Harris
*DOC | *audiobook | ebooks |*
Download PDF | ePub

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #33735 dans eBooksPubli le: 2010-09-21Sorti le: 2010-09-21Format: Ebook Kindle

[Read ebook] Archangel

Par Robert Harris : Archangel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Archangel:

Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurA number one bestseller from the award-winning master of the literary and historical thriller genre: Robert Harris. A gripping, thrilling explosion into Russias mysterious history...When historian Fluke Kelso learns of the existence of a secret notebook belonging to Josef Stalin he is determined to track it down, whatever the consequences. From the violent political intrigue and decadence of modern Moscow he heads north - to the vast forests surrounding the White Sea port of Archangel, and a terrifying encounter with Russia's unburied past.ExtraitTo choose one's victims, to prepare one's plans minutely, to slake an implacable vengeance, and then to go to bed . . . there is nothing sweeter in the world.--J. V. Stalin, in conversation with Kamenev and DzerzhinskyOlga Komarova of the Russian Archive Service, Rosarkhiv,

wielding a collapsible pink umbrella, prodded and shooed her distinguished charges across the Ukraina's lobby toward the revolving door. It was an old door, of heavy wood and glass, too narrow to cope with more than one body at a time, so the scholars formed a line in the dim light, like parachutists over a target zone, and as they passed her, Olga touched each one lightly on the shoulder with her umbrella, counting them off one by one as they were propelled into the freezing Moscow air.Franklin Adelman of Yale went first, as befitted his age and status, then Moldenhauer of the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, with his absurd double doctorate--Dr. Dr. Karl-bloody-Moldenhauer--then the neo-Marxists, Enrico Banfi of Milan and Eric Chambers of the LSE, then the great cold warrior Phil Duberstein, of NYU, then Ivo Godelier of the Ecole Normale Suprieure, followed by glum Dave Richards of St. Antony's, Oxford--another Sovietologist whose world was rubble--then Velma Byrd of the U.S. National Archive, then Alastair Findlay of Edinburgh's Department of War Studies, who still thought the sun shone out of Comrade Stalin's ass, then Arthur Saunders of Stanford, and finally--the man whose lateness had kept them waiting in the lobby for an extra five minutes--Dr. C.R.A. Kelso, commonly known as Fluke.The door banged hard against his heels. Outside, the weather had worsened. It was trying to snow. Tiny flakes, as hard as grit, came whipping across the wide gray concourse and spattered his face and hair. At the bottom of the flight of steps, shuddering in a cloud of its own white fumes, was a dilapidated bus, waiting to take them to the symposium. Kelso stopped to light a cigarette."Jesus, Fluke," called Adelman, cheerfully. "You look just awful."Kelso raised a fragile hand in acknowledgment. He could see a huddle of taxi drivers in quilted jackets stamping their feet against the cold. Workmen were struggling to lift a roll of tin off the back of a truck. One Korean businessman in a fur hat was photographing a group of twenty others, similarly dressed. But of Papu Rapava, no sign."Dr. Kelso, please, we are waiting again." The umbrella wagged at him in reproof. He transferred the cigarette to the corner of his mouth, hitched his bag up onto his shoulder, and moved toward the bus."A battered Byron" was how one Sunday newspaper had described him when he had resigned his Oxford lectureship and moved to New York, and the description wasn't a bad one--curly black hair too long and thick for neatness, a moist, expressive mouth, pale cheeks, and the glow of a certain reputation--if Byron hadn't died on Missolonghi but had spent the next ten years drinking whiskey, smoking, staying indoors, and resolutely avoiding all exercise, he too might have come to look a little like Fluke Kelso.He was wearing what he always wore: a faded dark blue shirt of heavy cotton with the top button undone; a loosely knotted and vaguely stained dark tie; a black corduroy suit with a black leather belt, over which his stomach bulged slightly; red cotton handkerchief in his breast pocket; scuffed boots of brown suede; an old blue raincoat. This was Kelso's uniform, unvaried for twenty years."Boy," Rapava had called him, and the word was both absurd for a middle-aged man and yet oddly accurate. Boy.The heater was going full blast. Nobody was saying much. He sat on his own near the back of the bus and rubbed at the wet glass as they jolted up the ramp to join the traffic on the bridge. Across the aisle, Saunders made an ostentatious display of batting Kelso's smoke away. Beneath them, in the filthy waters of the Moskva, a dredger with a crane mounted on its aft deck beat sluggishly upstream.He nearly hadn't come to Russia. That was the joke of it. He knew well enough what it would be like: the bad food, the stale gossip, the sheer bloody tedium of academic life--of more and more being said about less and less. That was one reason why he had chucked Oxford and gone to live in New York. But somehow the books he was supposed to write had not quite materialized. And besides, he never could resist the lure of Moscow. Even now, sitting on a stale bus in the Wednesday rush hour, he could feel the charge of history beyond the muddy glass: in the dark and renamed streets, the vast apartment blocks, the toppled statues. It was stronger here than anywhere he knew, stronger even than in Berlin. That was what always drew him back to Moscow--the way history hung in the air between the blackened buildings like sulfur after a lightning strike."You think you know it all about Comrade Stalin, don't you, boy? Well, let me tell you: You don't know fuck."Kelso had already delivered his short paper, on Stalin and the archives, at the end of the previous day: delivered it in his trademark style--without notes, with one hand in his pocket, extempore, provocative. His Russian hosts had looked gratifyingly shifty. A couple of people had even walked out. So, all in all, a triumph.Afterward, finding himself predictably alone, he had decided to walk back to the Ukraina. It was a long walk and it was getting dark, but he needed the air. And at some point--he couldn't remember where; maybe it was in one of the back streets behind the Institute or maybe it was later, along the Noviy Arbat--but at some point he had realized he was being followed. It was nothing tangible, just a fleeting impression of something seen too often--the flash of a coat, perhaps, or the shape of a head--but Kelso had been in Moscow often enough in the bad old days to know that you were seldom wrong about these things. You always knew if a film was out of synch, however fractionally; you always knew if

someone fancied you, however improbably; and you always knew when someone was on your tail.He had just stepped into his hotel room and was contemplating some primary research in the minibar when the front desk had called up to say there was a man in the lobby who wanted to see him. Who? He wouldn't give his name, sir. But he was most insistent and he wouldn't leave. So Kelso had gone down, reluctantly, and found Papu Rapava sitting on one of the Ukraina's imitation-leather sofas, staring straight ahead, in his papery blue suit, his wrists and ankles sticking out as thin as broomsticks."You think you know it all about Comrade Stalin, don't you, boy?" Those had been his opening words.And that was the moment when Kelso had realized where he had first seen the old man--at the symposium, in the front row of the public seats, listening intently to the simultaneous translation over his headphones, muttering in violent disagreement at any hostile mention of J. V. Stalin.Who are you? thought Kelso, staring out of the grimy window. Fantasist? Con man? The answer to a prayer?The symposium was scheduled to last only one more day--for which relief, in Kelso's view, much thanks. It was being held in the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, an orthodox temple of gray concrete, consecrated in the Brezhnev years, with Marx, Engels, and Lenin in gigantic bas-relief above the pillared entrance. The ground floor had been leased to a private bank, since gone bust, which added to the air of dereliction.On the opposite side of the street, watched by a couple of bored-looking militiamen, a small demonstration was in progress--maybe a hundred people, mostly elderly, but with a few youths in black berets and leather jackets. It was the usual mixture of fanatics and grudge holders--Marxists, nationalists, anti-Semites. Crimson flags bearing the hammer and sickle hung beside black flags embroidered with the czarist eagle. One old lady carried a picture of Stalin; another sold cassettes of SS marching songs. An elderly man with an umbrella held over him was addressing the crowd through a bullhorn, his voice a distorted, metallic rant. Stewards were handing out a free newspaper called Aurora."Take no notice," instructed Olga Komarova, standing up beside the driver. She tapped the side of her head. "These are crazy people. Red fascists.""What's he saying?" demanded Duberstein, who was considered a world authority on Soviet communism even though he had never quite gotten around to learning Russian."He's talking about how the Hoover Institution tried to buy the Party archive for five million bucks," said Adelman. "He says we're trying to steal their history."Duberstein sniggered. "Who'd want to steal their goddamn history?" He tapped on the window with his signet ring. "Say, isn't that a TV crew?"The sight of a camera caused a predictable, wistful stir among the academics."I believe so . . .""How very flattering . . .""What's the name," said Adelman, "of the fellow who runs Aurora? Is it still the same one?" He twisted around in his seat and called up the aisle. "Fluke--you should know. What's his name? Old KGB--""Mamantov," said Kelso. The driver braked hard, and he had to swallow to stop himself from being sick. "Vladimir Mamantov.""Crazy people," repeated Olga, bracing herself as they came to a stop. "I apologize on behalf of Rosarkhiv. They are not representative. Follow me, please. Ignore them."They filed off the bus, and a television cameraman filmed them as they trudged across the asphalt forecourt, past a couple of drooping, silvery fir trees, pursued by jeers.Fluke Kelso moved delicately at the rear of the column, nursing his hangover, holding his head at a careful angle, as if he were balancing a pitcher of water. A pimply youth in wire spectacles thrust a copy of Aurora at him, a...Revue de presse"The best thriller for years" (Sunday Telegraph)"His best yet: a fast paced thriller, pulsing with suspense, that surpasses even the expertly handled tensions and twists of Fatherland" (Sunday Times)"Robert Harris confirms his position as Britain's pre-eminent literary thriller writer with Archangel" (The Times)"A really gripping narrative, full of suspense and unexpected turns, which will keep you hooked until the climax on its final page... I have never read a thriller based in Russia which has such an authentic feel" (Evening Standard)"Archangel is Harris's strongest book yet, confirming him as the leading current exponent of the intelligent literary thriller" (The Times)