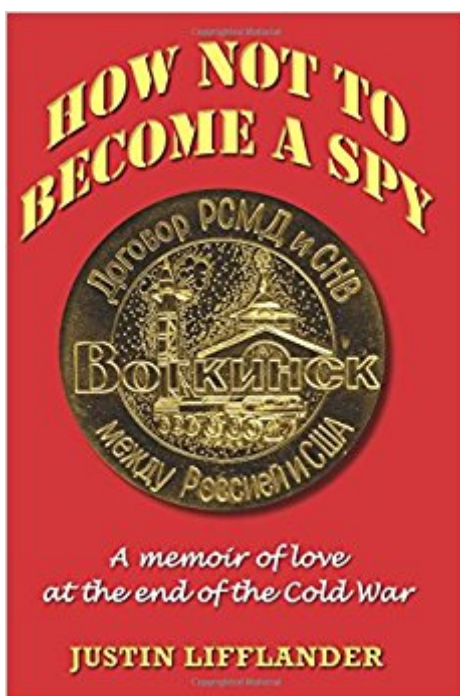


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How Not To Become A Spy: A Memoir Of Love At The End Of The Cold War



Synopsis

Justin Lifflander dreams of becoming an intelligence officer and joining the Cold War fight against the Russians. Following internships at the State Department and the FBI, he lands a job at the US Embassy in Moscow. But Lifflander's story turns out to be less "The Spy Who Loved Me" and more "Ferris Bueller's Day Off". He sets off for provincial Russia to live outside the gate of a nuclear missile factory and work as an inspector-janitor-chef on the US monitoring team. There he discovers Russians are just as friendly--and suspicious--as their American counterparts. What sinister significance could the Americans' pink lawn flamingos have? The local KGB wants to know. The Americans are managed by young female "escorts" tasked by the KGB to watch for signs of espionage. They begin to manipulate Lifflander's favorite--a pretty girl named Sofia. Against the rules and reason, Justin and Sofia become emotionally involved. Both a romantic comedy of errors and a narrative glimpse into the golden age of US-USSR relations during perestroika, Lifflander's memoir is revealed through deeply personal experience, humor, and heartache. It reminds us our enemies are never as unknowable as we think or as easy to fathom as we'd like.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I very much enjoyed this book because of the various American and Russian citizens described in it. They are real people in every sense of the word. I also love the historical aspect as that was a very important time in the world's history. The book is well written by Justin Lifflander and I congratulate

and thank him for sticking it out until it was finally published. I can tell you after reading the book, that his wife knew he would get the book published!

Provides unique insight into one component of the US-Soviet/Russian Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty at Votkinsk, in the Udmurt Republic, USSR, where U.S. inspectors monitored the output of a Soviet missile factory (as Soviet inspectors did in the U.S. at Magna, Utah). "Walt Knight" is clearly Scott Ritter (Ritter = "knight" in German...). For those who've been there, it'll bring back memories. For those interested in US-Soviet relations, it'll give some idea of how things worked where the rubber meets the road. Lifflander picks the forbidden fruit of an affair with one of the Soviet social escorts, as did Ritter.

Even tho there were a few words I wouldn't use, what a sweet story of the pursuit of love and happiness! Good job. Really enjoyed the book! Also: the editing was perfect.

OK, so I may be biased because I first read this book in manuscript. But if I liked it before it was polished, you'll love it as a finished work. You'll be ambushed and delighted at every turn. The narrator is this naive and charmingly serious guy, who is unstoppable in his quest for life. Sometimes he's saucy, and sometimes tense, but he solves his problems, gets his girl, and avoids most traps and pitfalls of life in that really dangerous country. Some of the images he creates along the way are impossible to forget, like the sergeant who seems to come with spare body parts, or the girl whose luggage search at the border reveals a surprisingly large object... But I don't want to give anything away. This is a fun book. Enjoy.

Beautiful story told from a unique point of view.

This book is lots of fun, appropriate for understanding aspects of the Cold War that made the lives of Americans in Russia occasionally very silly, but also there's good portraits on "the Soviets" (some big shots, some small shots) and how their country eventually collapsed... People who stuck around (like Lifflander) will see obvious parallels to current life in Russia, which has changed in some ways but barely in others. Justin Lifflander is much more than just an educated observer of Russia at the end of the Cold War. He is like Graham Greene's "Our Man in Havana" but in Moscow instead of Cuba, and also "post- post- post- Our Man in Havana". He is a highly educated and bilingual Cornell American, and knows just when, and when not, to take himself and his surroundings seriously. Let's

see the sequel as the non-spy businessman appears to have stayed in Russia for decades beyond the focus of this book, with high level positions in business and journalism, making money in the post-Soviet world... He's got to tell us to what extent anything has really changed (I suspect, not much)...

Wonderful Book.

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