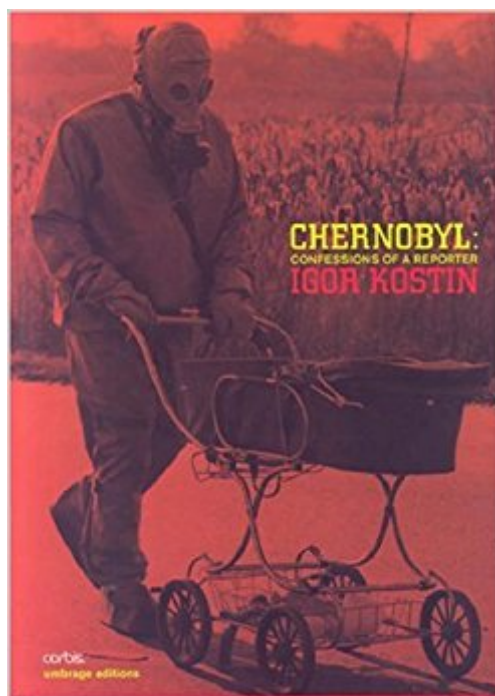


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Chernobyl: Confessions Of A Reporter



Synopsis

On April 26, 1986, Reactor #4 at the V. I. Lenin Nuclear Power Plant near Chernobyl exploded, releasing 400 times more radioactive matter than the bombing of Hiroshima. Igor Kostin, then a reporter for the Novosti Agency, took the very first photograph of the accident, continuing to endure massive radiation overexposure to document the disaster for the International Atomic Energy Agency. For the next twenty years he persistently investigated the explosion's effects on mankind and the environment. This never-seen-before photographic collection tells the incredible stories of liquidators, soldiers, scientists, and residents throughout Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Latvia, Germany, Sweden, and France that have been socially, politically, and medically impacted by the catastrophe, creating a global perspective of the tragedy. With a distance of 20 years this spring, Chernobyl: Confession of a Reporter sparks timely debate over the health and sociological implications of current global energy policies. Igor Kostin, born in Moldava in 1936, is a laureate of the most distinguished international prizes including five World Press Photo, a contributor to Time, Newsweek, Paris-Match, Liberation, and Stern. Kostin lives and works in Kiev, 50 kilometers from Chernobyl.

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Customer Reviews

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I was a sophomore in college on April 26, 1985 when the news of Chernobyl broke. I remember sitting with friends in my dorm room when someone down the hall prompted us to adjust our television's aluminum foil "rabbit ears" to see the news of an explosion at a nuclear reactor in the Soviet Union. Looking back, I recall two simultaneous reactions: 1) This may be serious and 2) It's the Soviet Union, so we'll never hear the truth about what really happened. But, being young and in college (at springtime) on the other side of the world, the importance of Chernobyl as a newsworthy event dissipated almost immediately. Over twenty years later, I finally took an interest in the Chernobyl accident ... after playing two video games that generated a simply amazing first-person "tour" of the Chernobyl plant and the haunting ghost-town of Pripyat (who says video games are mindless?). The scenery in the games generated a craving to learn more about the mysterious events surrounding Chernobyl and the events that followed. In my quest to obtain more knowledge, I wanted a definitive pictorial reference and Igor Kostin's *CHERNOBYL: CONFESSIONS OF A REPORTER* proved to be an essential resource for me. The problem I've discovered with Chernobyl is that it doesn't seem to get the attention it deserves. While the accident is always referenced as the "worst nuclear disaster in history", the event, 25 years later, still remains clouded in mystery and for many in the Western Hemisphere, it sadly doesn't even register as a significant event (just ask any college kid). Making matters worse, there is very little photographic evidence to paint a clearer picture of the event and its aftermath (other than the exploitation and exaggeration of Chernobyl by video game developers). This is why I found Igor Kostin's book to be so valuable. Kostin was there, with his camera, in April 1986 and was so touched by the events unfolding that he kept coming back ... even though it almost cost him his life. *CHERNOBYL: CONFESSIONS OF A REPORTER* is a phenomenal photographic chronicle of the Chernobyl accident and its impact on the people and places associated with it. While primarily a book of photographs grouped into chapters dedicated to subject-matter, the pictures only tell part of the story. Kostin's words add a significant degree of depth and sadness to the visual presentation. The combination of words and photos paint a much clearer picture of the drama that unfolded at Chernobyl in 1986 and the eerie nature of Soviet Union using humans as fodder in response to a crisis. Starting with the only known picture taken of the Chernobyl plant the day of the explosion (a radiation-hazed aerial view of the gaping hole in the No. 4 reactor), what follows is a gloomy photographic account of what happened after the accident: doomed men (known as "liquidators") assigned to remove the super-deadly radioactive debris from the reactor's core ... the subsequent evacuation of those living within the 30km zone surrounding the crippled plant ... the construction of the concrete and lead sarcophagus meant to contain the

still-volatile core ... and the contaminated wasteland that remains. The pictures speak volumes: the photo of men wearing simple masks and gloves while shoveling chunks of highly-radioactive graphite on the roof of the damaged reactor is in direct contrast to the photo of a man testing radiation levels miles away from the plant wearing a fully protective suit. Other photos document meager attempts of Soviet Union to contain the spread of radiation by burying villages and creating graveyards for the multitude of contaminated vehicles, but not the looters scavenging radioactive parts. Photos of an eight-footed foal and a child suffering from mutations serve as examples of anomalies that may be linked to the disaster. Kostin's photos and accompanying commentary initially reveal a much more chaotic and desperate scenario that I have previously seen, but photos of his subsequent returns to the region reveal the eerie beauty of nature's resilience (a radiation warning sign amid a field of yellow flowers) and man's doggedness (elderly villagers fearlessly returning to their contaminated villages). Kostin even documents his own bout with radiation sickness following numerous visits to the region.

CHERNOBYL: CONFESSIONS OF A REPORTER is an excellent graphic account of the disaster in that it provides an up-close viewing of how man contained an unleashed nuclear beast (at least temporarily). While the pictures tell a story, it is the author's brief introductions to each chapter and photo commentary that bring the pictures to life. An impressive book that does more than simply illustrate a sequence of events, **CONFESSIONS OF A REPORTER** adds scope and gravity to the Chernobyl tragedy.

For people who love to see great pictures about the Chernobyl tragedy this book is a blessing. From day one Igor took pictures and continued to do so. This book will give you a view from the disaster and its impact. All condensed in one book. Not only are the pictures of great quality, but pictures are also accompanied with good comments that put the pictures in the right perspective. Highly recommended for picture lovers and people who are interested in the Chernobyl disaster and its impact on the environment and people's lives.

I was surprised by the amount of photographs, but was definitely not disappointed. Many of these photos are iconic to the Chernobyl disaster so you may have seen them before. This book tells the story of the Chernobyl disaster through the eyes of Igor Kostin and his photos. There are a few possible typos, but overall it's an excellent book and I am glad to have it in my collection.

This book is good for someone who likes 50% photos and 50% texts. I really enjoyed it and got the true sense of the devastation of how Chernobyl changed everything. I've always been fascinated

with Chernobyl but to have it in pictures is powerful. I soon found a BBC docu-drama similar to the story in the book. Made me interested in more specific details of this time in history.

I purchased this book because I have a fascination for the Chernobyl disaster. Written by one of the first to reach the site of the accident and to photograph it, this guy has guts that most of us only can imagine and dream we may act in such a heroic way. The photos are astonishing especially the one looking directly down into the open roof of the reactor. I highly recommend this photo essay to anyone interested in the Chernobyl incident.

Quite interesting, amazing photos and impeccable material. It's a really great edition and, above all, the information it provides, makes you realize the importance of those moments of history.

Fabulous, Fabulous, Fabulous insight and angle on what happened at Chernobyl. I read the entire book in one night! What a brave and intriguing man, Igor Kostin is! Great photographs and brief summaries between chapters of what happened. Must get to keep on your shelf.

This reporter lived through the disaster and tells of it in a "No holds barred" way, fantastic reading and some great photos.....

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