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When nuclear forces clash beneath the polar ice cap, the world teeters on the brink of Armageddon.

Typhoon Details

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Author : Robin White

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From Reader Review Typhoon for online ebook

Patrick says

Cat-and-mouse between Russian and American submarines? Check. Firm command of technical detail? Check. More going on than a traversal of Arctic waters? Check. But all that stuff is what I would expect in a novel of this kind.

What makes "Typhoon" an engaging read is that Robin White supplies plot twists along the way (that's not easy when you're working from the "submarine duel" template). White also works to flesh out his characters. Among the Americans, we get to know a captain, an executive officer, a chief of the boat, and a troublemaking Ensign well. Among the Russians, focus narrows to a pair of captains (one experienced, the other not) and an engineering chief.

It would have been nice to know more about a female linguist who plays a pivotal role in the story, and nice to have cutaway diagrams of the involved submarines, but not having those things is disappointing rather than devastating. White tells a good sea story confidently.

Kwing (Mook) says

Borrows heavily from Clancy, with a little captain Ahab muxed. Lacks the underlying drive that makes you keep turning pages.

Eric_W says

The *Baikal* is a Typhoon-class Russian ballistic missile submarine. It's huge, the size of a WW II aircraft carrier, and the United States paid Russia to destroy as part of the reduction of nuclear weapons. The Chinese, eager to force a confrontation over Taiwan, have their own plans for the sub. They have paid corrupt Russian officials to deliver the sub to them, and, unbeknownst to the sub's volunteer crew, it's loaded with 20 nuclear tipped ballistic missiles. (This puzzled me as the sub would have trimmed differently with all that weight on board; surely the captain would have noticed the difference. Ah well, it's fiction.)

There's another sub in the water, the *Portland*, an American *Los Angeles*-class attack sub with a dysfunctional captain, a rebellious crew, and a woman lieutenant who speaks Russian. She and the captain, commander Vann, who has a very checkered past, get off to a bad start, and things go downhill from there. Everyone seems to have an ax to grind. An admiral at Norfolk wants Vann to prevent the Russian sub from making it through the Bering Straits, and issues orders with enough leeway to give the Vann an excuse to torpedo the Russian sub. Lots of interesting maneuvering under the ice and tricks to fool sonar.

The issue of women aboard subs is not handled with any subtlety. Scavello, the female Lieutenant, seems to have little to do and the enlisted men nothing better than to complain about the soap she uses. White does a nice job of portraying the devastation and poverty facing the Russian Navy, in fact the Russians come across much better than the Americans.

If you liked *The Hunt for Red October* (I did, about the only Clancy I do like,) you'll love this cat-and-mouse sub chase and the little assorted side-plots. Several Amazon reviewers complained that the book was a mish-mash of Clancy's novel and *Crimson Tide*. Picky, picky. I love the technical detail, the more the merrier.

Robin White is listed as the co-author of the very excellent *Hostile Waters* with Peter Huchthausen. I could not verify that and the Huchthausen book lists an R. Alan White. If anyone knows if these authors are the same, I'd appreciate knowing.

Paul says

To bring an end to the Cold War (and, no doubt, to reassert its naval mastery of the seas), the American government has paid the Russian government handsomely to retire and scrap its aging fleet of missile submarines. These "Typhoon" class behemoths had the sole purpose of hiding in the vast oceans, ready to launch their nuclear missiles in the event that the Cold War turned hot.

Oversight of the boats' destruction has been lax, however, and some elements in the Russian government and Navy have made a deal to sell Baikal, a Typhoon-class sub, to the mainland Chinese. A small but skilled crew is chosen to pilot the boat from its Russian port on the Berents Sea to meet its buyers just south of the Bering Straights, a trip that will take Baikal under the Arctic polar ice cap.

As the situation becomes known to the Americans, the USS Portland is tasked with delaying Baikal from making her rendezvous with her Chinese buyers. So the two subs begin a dangerous game of cat-and-mouse under the polar ice.

The plot setup for this book drives the story pretty well, but White's characters are too one-dimensional to provide any reason to pick this book out of the legion of military techno-thrillers published in the wake of Tom Clancy's seminal *The Hunt for Red October*. The characters in *Typhoon* are given a small personality box—each is either good, violent, loyal, greedy, conflicted, or whatever—and once a character's motif is established, they all stay true to form. No surprises await anyone keeping tabs on the characters in this story.

Peter says

Big let down, so slow. DNF.

Thompson says

This is *The Hunt For Red October* on steroids with better dialogue.

Gloria says

This was a page turner of a military story. The two submarines came to life for me as the crews fought to find each other, to follow orders, and to search for the best outcome. The technical information was great.

Presented throughout the story but not over done or incomprehensible. The characters were well-drawn through word and deed so you didn't need to know much of their history to become involved with them. Loved that sense of being blindfolded and tuning your senses to their most sensitive.

Kyra says

I had to wait a couple of days after finishing reading Typhoon before writing this review, so my heart rate could slow down. This is the single most suspenseful edge-of-the-seat book I have ever read, and I am so NOT a submarine fan or a techno military thriller fan or a machinery person. You could not pay me enough money to even tour a docked sub - well, especially after reading this. Damn, this is a good book!

Stephen Clarke says

I picked this book up in a bargain bin along with another of the author's books so I was keeping my fingers crossed it would be good.

Well I can say that I really enjoyed this book, a good old fashioned cat and mouse game between two subs; one American and the other Russian. I enjoyed the plot and the characters and there was enough development of the story so I felt engaged and keen to see how the story would finish.

I look forward to reading the second Robin White book called "Hunters In The Sea". If it is like "Typhoon", I won't be disappointed or bored rather I may have trouble putting it down!

Kara Jorges says

When I first picked up this thick tome, I hoped it wasn't going to be one of those military submarine stories that takes place entirely underwater. I had recently read two other submarine novels, and I wasn't sure I wanted to read another right now. Even with this prejudice, and even though this entire book took place aboard two military submarines, it took little time to win me over, and I likely dented the cover gripping it during the climactic scenes.

The Los Angeles-class submarine Portland is spying in Russian waters when it gets caught and has a noisemaker attached to its hull. In its retreat to safer waters, the Portland nearly misses the passage of a behemoth Russian submarine, the Typhoon-class Baikal. Baikal had supposedly been sold to the USA and sent to scrap, but after cannibalizing the rest of the Russian fleet, Baikal is seaworthy and ready for sale to the Chinese. All her crew has to do is evade the Americans and sail her through the tight, shallow confines of the Bering Strait. It's not easy hiding such a huge submarine, however, and a tense game of cat and mouse ensues.

The Russians should be the bad guys, but they are not. The crew of Baikal are with only one exception fine men, their captain caring and brave. Alexander Markov is making his final voyage as a submarine captain, after which he will take his bonus and retire with his wife and child. His co-captain, Genady Fedorenko, is little more than a government overseer, but is also hiding a secret the American government somehow knows about that could sink Baikal.

Portland's captain, Commander James Vann, is a man on a mission. After a Russian sub ran him aground a few years back, he was lucky to get command of a hard luck boat like Portland. Vann's discipline turned the boat around, but his singleminded vendetta and determination to sink Baikal at all costs have his junior officers closely watching him. The navy also stuck him with the first woman to sail on a submarine, a challenge his sexist nature is not prepared to meet.

I didn't think the story of two submarines hunting and evading each other in the polar seas would be very exciting, but I was quite wrong. From the dramas that unfold among their crews to the heart-stopping chase and collision scenes, this book is a real page-turner. I especially liked the way the author didn't automatically paint the Russians as villains, instead choosing less obvious villains among both the American and Russian crews, which created tense drama on both boats. I wanted just about everybody to succeed at their missions, yet it seemed impossible with the conflicting agendas at play. A good read from start to finish with warm, likeable characters and a bit of international intrigue, I highly recommend this excellent book.

Nikki Balzer says

easy to read, took me about half way through to get really interested and then was galloping through the pages. ending was with getting to.

Adnan says

This was the first submarine novel I read, and it got me hooked to submarine warfare fiction. Typhoon submarines are independently interesting, with their ability to break through the polar ice using their sheer buoyancy.

Lyon says

Typhoon was one of the best naval warfare books I have ever read. Well, I have not read that many to be fair, but Typhoon was a mixture of action and facts. It taught you enough, may it be true or false, I don't know, to actually make it feel like a nonfiction book with action. This book is actually a fiction, and I recommend this book to teenagers and up.

Tom says

Very exciting book. Too bad the "happy ending" of every little detail becomes predictable in the end.

Drew says

This is a book right the same calibur as Red October if not better. We gave the Russians billions of dollars to

scrap their Typhoon submarines, which during the cold war were the biggest and most powerful subs in the ocean. The Russians scrapped all but one and sent it on a secret mission across the top of the world to tip the balance of power in a new Cold War.
