

Katri Rauanjoki: *Uncle Lenin Doesn't Live Here Anymore*

Original title: Lenin-setä ei asu enää täällä
Publisher: S&S, 2019

A novel about longing and the North

Uncle Lenin Doesn't Live Here Anymore takes readers on a journey to Svalbard, the Far North. During the Soviet era, the village of Pyramiden was a vibrant Russian community, where people worked, went to dances at the Cultural Center, fell in love, and cried.

The stark, harsh environment defines the outlines of a place that is totally different today: all but one of the village's buildings are closed, and in winter, when the tourists have left, only five people populate the village. One of them, Kiril, is a Finn and is staying through the winter on a journey motivated by his past. Though there's plenty of space, life is cramped in the midst of the cold, dark, and snow. The others ask, "Kiril, why have you come?"

Decades-old memories return, tinged with longing, but the loss obscured by the empty buildings is also close at hand. Kiril's question is: "Why did you stay?" *Uncle Lenin Doesn't Live Here Anymore* is a novel set between worlds that explores how man always seeks freedom, but needs the pack.

Book review quotes:

"People seek freedom but need the pack – the book of the week depicts fervent longing in the frigid North. Katri Rauanjoki's novel takes you to Svalbard and the echoes of the Soviet Union."
—Antti Majander, *Helsingin Sanomat*

"Distance allows for a closer view. If you love the crumbling Soviet aesthetic and feel drawn to the remote corners of the earth, Katri Rauanjoki's *Uncle Lenin Doesn't Live Here Anymore* is just for you."
—Marjo Jääskä, *Kaltio* magazine

"Where *Uncle Lenin Doesn't Live Here Anymore* succeeds is in its depiction of self-imposed isolation as well as the psychic weight imposed by living in extreme conditions."
—Marissa Mehr, *Turun Sanomat*

"Katri Rauanjoki's novel *Uncle Lenin Doesn't Live Here Anymore* opens beautifully, and readers are treated to beautiful and fluid language all the way through – to the language, the careful observations, and the mysterious, multilayered story."
—*Kirjokansi* blog

Synopsis translated by Christina Saarinen.