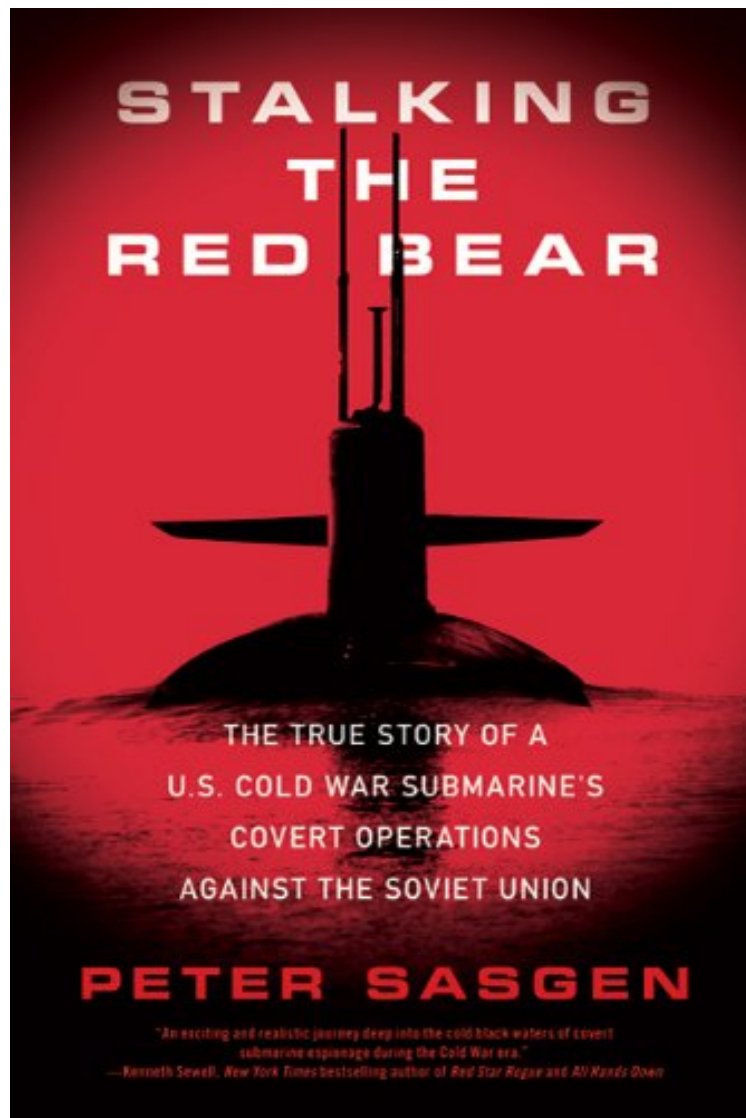


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## Stalking the Red Bear: The True Story of a U.S. Cold War Submarine's Covert Operations Against the Soviet Union

*Peter Sasgen*

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1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Experience the not so cold, Cold War!By kris fullington. Being a "Cold War", boat sailor myself I found it very accurate with security bounds. Vividly illustrates the stress we operated under. Although as a "Nuke", I do take exception to the accidental "scramming", of the reactor. On the boats I served on, a total of five that never happened once!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Who knew.By SparkyMay not have believed every word of the book, but it was a very good read.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A very good readBy pfgcpr Truly interesting. I recommend it to anyone interested in Submarine stories

Thrilling submarine espionage and an inside look at the U.S. Navy's "silent service" *Stalking the Red Bear*, for the first time ever, describes the action principally from the perspective of a commanding officer of a nuclear submarine during the Cold War -- the one man aboard a sub who makes the critical decisions -- taking readers closer to the Soviet target than any work on submarine espionage has ever done before. This is the untold story of a covert submarine espionage operation against the Soviet Union during the Cold War as experienced by the Commanding Officer of an active submarine. Few individuals outside the intelligence and submarine communities knew anything about these top-secret missions. Cloaking itself in virtual invisibility to avoid detection, the USS *Blackfin* went sub vs. sub deep within Soviet-controlled waters north of the Arctic Circle, where the risks were extraordinarily high and anything could happen. Readers will know what it was like to carry out a covert mission aboard a nuke and experience the sights, sounds, and dangers unique to submarining.

"An exciting and realistic journey deep into the cold black waters of covert submarine espionage during the Cold War era." ?Kenneth Sewell, New York Times bestselling author of *Red Star Rogue* and *All Hands Down*"No submariner has ever served aboard a boat called *Blackfin*, and every submariner has. For nukes especially, *Stalking the Red Bear* is a cross between finding a covert diary and coming home." ?Sherry Sontag, coauthor of the New York Times bestseller *Blind Man's Bluff: The Untold Story of American Submarine Espionage*About the AuthorPeter Sasgen, who worked closely with the sub's commanding officer on this project, is an expert on submarines. He has written both fiction and nonfiction on the subject, including several thrillers and a nonfiction book, *Red Scorpion*, on World War II submarine warfare. He lives in Florida.Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.Chapter OneA DEADLY GAMEU.S. NAVY COMMANDER Roy Hunter, captain of the USS *Blackfin*, heard the sibilant beat of ships' screws and, through the raised periscope, saw the masts of hull-down Soviet warships. Electronic Signals Measures (ESM) intercepts of radar and radio transmissions had confirmed the presence of several ships and ASW helicopters as well as the high-frequency polarized radar the Soviet helos employed for detecting exposed submarine periscopes and masts.As he lowered the periscope, Hunter ordered, "Lower all masts. All ahead two-thirds. Make your depth two-five-zero feet. The officer of the deck has the conn."Hunter announced his intention to track the contacts via passive sonar, then ordered the officer of the deck (OOD), a young lieutenant, to station the section .re-control tracking party, the team tasked with keeping tabs on a target's position. Rigged for red, the control room, with its lit up .re-control consoles and other vital instruments, had a spectral look."Conn, sonar; active sonar bearing one-three-zero," advised the sonar supervisor. "Frequency five kilohertz; ten-thousand-yard scale. Designate Sierra Ten."The OOD toggled his microphone switch. "Conn, aye."The report from sonar meant that the Soviet warships had shifted to high-powered active sonar, a sure sign they were searching for a submerged intruder."Officer of the deck, make your depth four-five-zero feet," ordered Hunter.Greater depth would provide an extra layer of invisibility, like pulling a blanket over their heads. Since making sonar contact with the ships, Hunter had been thinking, Avoid counterdetection. In other words, don't let the Soviets know you're there. If they do, you lose. Hunter was confident he could give them the slip— unless they got lucky, and so far it didn't seem likely.The Soviets relied on a rigid and highly codified ASW doctrine, what they called the "struggle against submarines." It was more a theory than a proven tactic. The Sovs, with their inferior passive sonar, often gave up searching for submerged U.S. subs simply because they were too quiet to detect. Yet when using active sonar they often regarded submerged contacts as anomalies caused by scatter or thermal gradients, or reverberations caused by shallow water. Moving west, the Sov ASW team's active sonar slowly started fading. So far so good. It seemed as if they'd lost the scent . . ."Conn, sonar; picked up a three-hundred-hertz tone. Bearing two-nine-zero, drawing right, designated Sierra Eleven. Classified as a submerged Type II." Sonar had a submerged Russian submarine contact, perhaps a Charlie or Victor nuclear attack sub.Hunter's submarine, moving silently, was nothing more than a hole in the ocean. Not so the Soviet sub."Come left to two-nine-zero," the OOD ordered.The helmsman confirmed the order; the American sub turned northwest.A moment later the OOD ordered, "Attention in the attack center. We'll maneuver to solve the target's course, speed, and range." Turning to Hunter, he asked, "Captain, should I try to get lined up for an ASPL?" "Not yet."Making absolute sound pressure level recordings of a Soviet submarine's noise levels was high on Holystone's intelligence-gathering list. First, though, Hunter had to determine what this one was up to and whether the contact intended to maintain the steady course and speed essential to making accurate ASPL recordings."Conn, sonar. Based on the tonal upshift, the range rate is a hundred yards per minute and closing." "Conn, aye."Hunter settled down to wait. After several minutes the OOD ordered, "Come right to course zero-two-zero." "I have Sierra Eleven on course zero-one-zero," reported the .re-control coordinator. "Speed ten,

range forty-one hundred yards." A touch over two miles. "Got a good solution on him for an ASPL—" "Conn, sonar!" The sonar supervisor broke in on .re control; the urgency in his voice was unmistakable. "Heard a transient, a thump, from Sierra Eleven." Hunter, his mind working like a computer, reviewed a picture of the setup in his head. He "saw" the approaching enemy sub in relation to his own sub, which he'd maneuvered to gain an advantage on the intruder. He was certain that the Soviet sub hadn't heard the maneuver, so how . . . ? It didn't matter how—that thump could only mean one thing, that he'd opened the outer doors on his torpedo tubes—"Conn, sonar—a single ping from Sierra Eleven!" Hunter heard it, too, on the UQC underwater phone at the periscope stand, a shrill pulse of pure sound energy .red by the Soviet sub at Hunter's sub. The ping meant that the Russian had painted the Americans with active sonar, a sign he was about to fire a torpedo at them! Before Hunter could issue orders, sonar broke in: "Torpedo in the water! Bearing three-one-two!" Hunter didn't hesitate; instinct and training took over. "I have the conn! All ahead flank! Right full rudder! Come to course one-three-five!" Caught by surprise, Hunter at first refused to believe what he'd heard. No Soviet sub would ever .re a torpedo at an American sub in peacetime. There were rules in the espionage game both sides were playing, and if they were violated it could start a goddamn war—a nuclear war! His gut tightened. Everything suddenly ground to a halt. There was nothing more he could do, no way to avoid disaster. Like the watchstanders frozen at their stations, he heard the incoming whine of the torpedo's up-Doppler props, counted down the seconds to impact, and—Lights snapped on in the control room. A moment later a voice boomed from a speaker: "You're sunk, Hunter." Chagrined, Hunter and his .re-control team blinked, looked around the attack center simulator's mocked-up control room, and then exchanged glances with each other. Hunter, at the periscope stand, blew through clenched teeth. It had only been an exercise, but goddamn it! The team running the simulation had slipped one in on him. A week of circling, weaving, chasing down multiple targets, avoiding detection, and now getting sunk had left him exhausted. Still, better to make big mistakes in the attack teacher than up in the Barents Sea where a real mistake could kill you, not just bruise your ego. In the simulator at the U.S. Navy's submarine school in New London, Connecticut, with its perfect scenario reconstruction, a guy could learn from his mistakes and live to tell about it. After all, here it was Americans against Americans. In the Barents it would be Americans against Soviets. Hunter lit a cigarette and thought of all the things that could go wrong up in the Barents Sea—and how it would be his job to make sure they didn't.

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