



K-19 THE WIDOWMAKER: The Secret Story of The Soviet Nuclear Submarine

By Peter Capt Ret Huchthausen



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An account of one of the Cold War era's most harrowing nuclear accidents documents the maiden voyage of the Soviet nuclear submarine, during which a serious reactor leak spurred a perilous race against time.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A companion to the feature film of the same name, *K-19: The Widowmaker* tells the hair-raising story of the Soviet submarine that nearly caused a nuclear meltdown in 1961. The sub developed a leak as it was heading toward the North Atlantic, and only the ingenious efforts of the crew eight of whom died within days from radiation poisoning staved off a global disaster. Author Peter Huchthausen, a retired U.S. Navy captain and former naval attach, in Moscow (as well as a technical adviser on the film), recounts the fateful events and also describes the making of the film.

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From [Booklist](#)

This book recaps the near-meltdown of a nuclear reactor in 1961 aboard the first Soviet ballistic missile boat, the *K-19*. The captain, Nikolai Zateyev, wrote a memoir of his career, which is extensively excerpted here and gives a glimpse into the Soviet nuclear navy and the shoddily constructed ships that Zateyev was given to command; a defective seal nearly sank the *K-19* on a shakedown cruise. Worse was to come, with sufficient radioactive drama to inspire a forthcoming film (with the same title) starring Zateyev look-alike Harrison Ford. After the accident was contained by the certain-death heroics of men who repaired the reactor, Zateyev found the culprit in the near cataclysm: incompetent welding. Not that the knowledge improved safety: author Huchthausen, a retired U.S. Navy expert on submarines, embeds Zateyev's tale of woe within the context of a series of submarine accidents culminating in the *kursk* sinking of 2000. A likely lure for maritime mavens. *Gilbert Taylor*

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Users Review

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Jonathan Garcia:

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