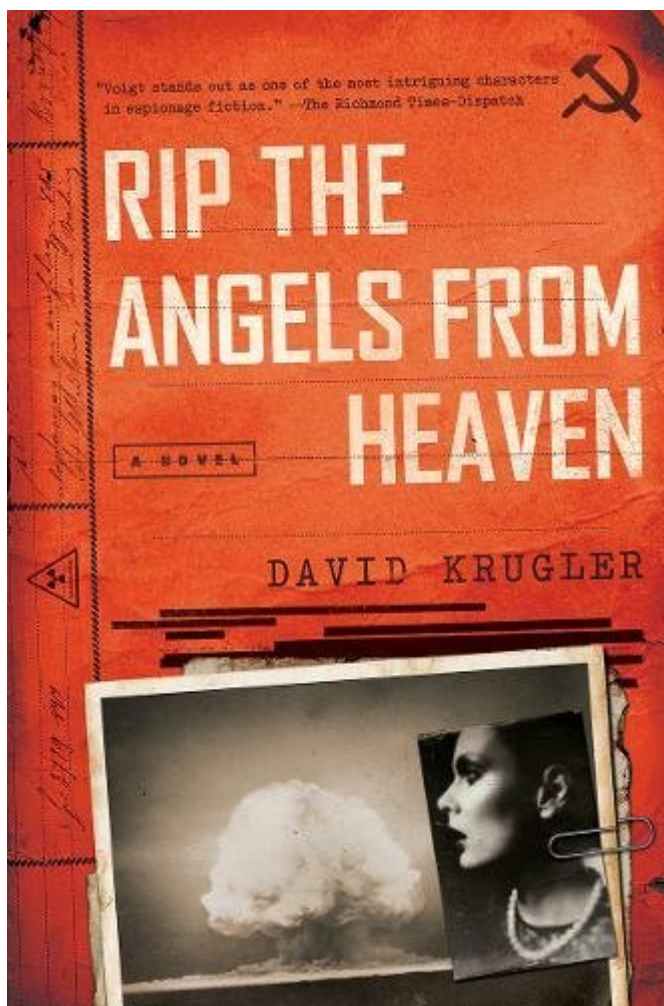


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## Rip the Angels from Heaven by David Krugler

Review published on August 11, 2018.

David Krugler is a strong new voice in historical spy fiction. The first Ellis Voigt novel *The Dead Don't Bleed* was a good story, *Rip the Angels from Heaven* is even better. Krugler has fully found his rhythm with this convoluted tale of deceit in Washington and Los Alamos in 1945. The Manhattan Project features a lot in literary and spy fiction (Robert Olen Butler's *Kanok* spring to mind), so it's a measure of how good this novel is that Krugler has brought us something fresh and original. This novel can easily be read as a standalone (although you will enhance your experience by reading *The Dead Don't Bleed*). If you're a fan of Vidich, you will love David Krugler.

July, 1945. Lieutenant Ellis Voigt works for the Office of Naval Intelligence – Sabotage, Espionage and Countersubversives. He opens with his report to Commander Burton Paslett on the murder of Lieutenant Logan Skerrill, shot to death in a Washington report identifies H&H Clippings, run by a man called Himmel, as a front for Soviet agents (a courier service). Voigt has an organisation claiming to be delivery man Ted Barton (dishonourable discharge and communist sympathies). Voigt gets involved in a secret army weapons project in New Mexico. He has established that Philip Greene (now in the hands of the FBI) shot Himmel's orders because he was a suspected FBI double. Since then Himmel has gone missing. Voigt makes two recommendations to find Himmel and find the identity of the spy in New Mexico.

It all starts to get a bit more complicated from there. Voigt is interrogated by the Russians, the NKVD. They know his real name, they know he was picked up by the FBI. They want to know about Voigt's last meeting with Himmel. Voigt says Himmel was a double agent about the FBI, they appear to believe him. So is Voigt working for the Russians? Voigt has lied to the interrogators but it's not clear. He spied on a meeting between Himmel and a messenger from the New Mexico Project. Voigt is keeping his name hidden from the FBI and, as Greene is blaming him for Skerrill's murder, they are very suspicious of him now. Voigt's in the hands of the Russians finding the boy who helped him and a naval engineer bug Himmel's meeting. A deadly chase across Washington

The only way Voigt can get out from under is to head to New Mexico to find the spy at Los Alamos. Putting him front and centre in the most momentous events in history. He has no idea of the Manhattan Project and the role the bomb is about to play. Nothing is quite what it seems, where the truth lies will only become evident in the last few pages. Voigt is a man with a plan, playing this game but does that make him a traitor? Can he be trusted to catch the spy?

The beauty of this novel is that Voigt could be playing a double game, maybe even a triple game, with the reader as much as the FBI and the NKVD. This makes *Rip the Angles from Heaven* tense and much more exciting than a straightforward thriller. There are twists aplenty and Voigt may be one of the most complex characters in the complex field of espionage.

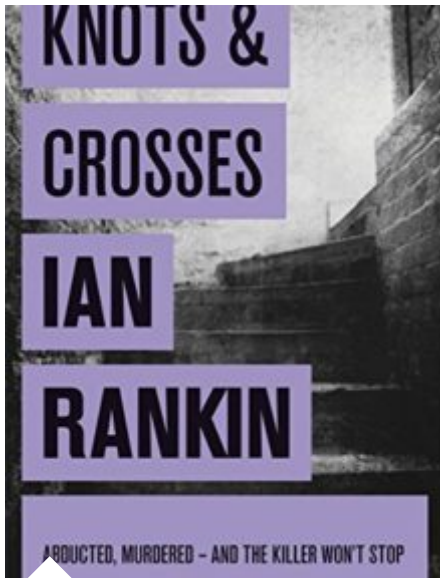
The dialogue is snappy, hardboiled and totally of the time. The location, the mind set of the period and the hyper-tense burgeoning Cold War and Los Alamos are brilliantly realised. Bearing in mind Russia was still an ally at this point.

It's a great mix of fact and fiction and a stunning work of research. This is a thriller that will leave you breathless. A real intelligent spy story that comes from the real world.

Paul Burke 4/4

Rip the Angels from Heaven by David Krugler  
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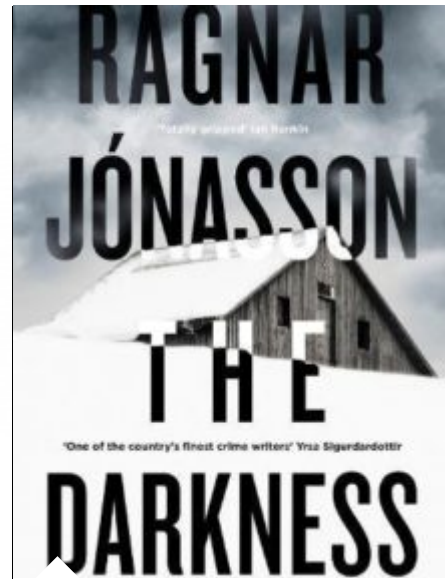
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