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# **Party Headquarters**

Georgi Tenev



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Winner of the Vick Foundation Novel of the Year Award in 2007, *Party Headquarters* takes place in the eighties and nineties, during Bulgaria's transition from communist rule to democracy.

The book—which is a love story, a parody, and a thriller about a political hoax—opens with the main character visiting his father-in-law, an old communist party boss who is dying, and being tasked with delivering a suitcase filled with one-and-a-half million euros.

It's one of Bulgaria's most popular myths: As the communist party fell apart, high ranking officials squirreled away bags and suitcases containing a significant portion of the country's wealth, and that these bags are still circulating through Europe, waiting to be delivered to various conspirators.

But this is just the beginning of the corruption and inequality that plagued Bulgaria during this time. While immersing himself in pornography and prostitution, the hero of *Party Headquarters* reflects back on his life and the emblematic events that took place around that time—the anticommunist protests, the arson attack on the Communist Party Headquarters in Sofia, and, most tragically and crucially, the Chernobyl disaster, during which the families of party officials were sheltered away and fed special, safe food, while the regular citizens suffered.

Beautiful and tragic, *Party Headquarters* is an engrossing testament to the struggles that haunted Bulgaria after the fall of the Soviet Union, many of which continue to resonate today.

Before penning the Vick Prize-winning novel *Party Headquarters*, **Georgi Tenev** had already published four books, founded the Triumviratus Art Group, hosted *The Library* television program about books, and written plays that have been performed in Germany, France, and Russia. He is also a screenwriter for film and TV.

**Angela Rodel** earned an MA in linguistics from UCLA and received a Fulbright Fellowship to study and learn Bulgarian.

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