



## Moscow Gold: A Novel of Twentieth-Century Spain

**Douglas L. Field**

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*Moscow Gold is a complex historical thriller in which an American journalist faces a cabal of spies.*

Set during the Spanish Civil War, Douglas Field's epic historical thriller *Moscow Gold* follows a search for missing treasure.

In Spain, thieves steal a briefcase that contains hundreds of gold coins. Who the coins belong to, and where they came from, remains in the shadows. David, an American journalist working in Spain during this time of great political and cultural upheaval, is tasked with investigating the gold; he learns that the Spanish government sent it to Russia to avoid losing it during the war. His inquiries lead him deep into the secret avenues of Europe and Asia. He's shadowed by spies who complicate his work. At the same time, he meets Ariel, "a beautiful woman with a beautiful soul." David would like to let his assignment go, but his villainous editor, Isham, pressures him to continue.

David's search is followed in a chronological manner; it lasts from 1936 to 1963. The story of the search is divided into periods for ease; each features historical tidbits that heighten the drama of David's investigation. Many happen outside of his sphere of influence, as with scenes in which Joseph Stalin tries to keep the gold or in which ships are lost at sea. The resultant historical insights are keen, with insights into a complicated period of Spanish history that includes dictators and their exploits, a variety of intergovernmental agencies, and multiple protest groups. However, the details are so voluminous that the central story is bogged down among them. More intriguing are David's own exploits across the years, which result in thrilling action scenes that help to sustain interest.

Isham is characterized well: he's willing to let David do his dirty work for him, resulting in suspense. But the book's other villains are less fleshed out. They include spies who are bent on David's destruction, and they are constructed in stereotypical terms. And the book's secondary characters are present most to people its complex historical underpinnings: David meets people who are struggling against government forces, and people who are within governments. Elsewhere, a friend trains him in the art of espionage.

After many years of investigation, David's work comes to a dramatic end that satisfies lingering questions about the missing gold. The narrative is followed by a lengthy essay with additional information, though this is less compelling than the story that precedes it.

*Moscow Gold* is a complex historical novel in which an American journalist faces a cabal of spies during the Spanish Civil War.

JEREMIAH ROOD (October 31, 2022)

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