

# EYE OF THE RED TSAR by Sam Eastland

## Discussion Questions

1. What enables Pekkala to survive for as long as he does as a tree marker?
2. How is Anton responsible for Pekkala being sent to the labor camp, and why did he do this?
3. What do you make of the facts that Kirov has gone from cook's school to political commissar in a matter of weeks and Anton has been promoted from corporal to commander just recently? What might this hint about the state of political affairs under the Soviet government?
4. How do you account for the personal connection between Pekkala and the Tsar that happens almost immediately?
5. Tsar Nicholas is pictured as a decent, even kind, man in this novel. Is this an accurate portrayal?
6. What do the complicated and deceitful plan of General Zubatov (head of the Tsar's secret police, the Okhrana) involving Grodek's supposed assassination of the Tsar and the reliance on Rasputin by the Tsar and Tsarina tell us about the state of affairs prior to the Revolution?
7. Why do you think so many Russians claim to have seen at least one of the Romanovs alive (after the shootings)?
8. Is Anton a good man? Why or why not?
9. Why does Kirov decide to spare Grodek? What do you think the future holds for Kirov?
10. Why does Stalin show Pekkala the picture of Ilya and tell Pekkala about her life in Paris?
11. Now that you've read this novel, what else do you want to know about the Romanovs, the Revolution, and its aftermath?
12. To what in Pekkala's character does Stalin appeal in an effort to get him to work for him?