

# Contents

Introduction: Why We Need to Talk  
About Putin 1

Putin's Timeline 7

Cast of Characters 9

Chapter 1: Putin Is a Judoka, Not a  
Chess Player 13

Chapter 2: Putin Was KGB, But Not as  
You Know It 27

Chapter 3: Putin's Not Looking to  
Revive the USSR, or Tsarism for  
That Matter 41

Chapter 4: Putin Sees Money as a Means,  
Not an End 55

Chapter 5: Putin Doesn't Read Philosophy,  
and Russia Is Not Mordor 67

Chapter 6: Putin Is Risk-Averse,  
Not a Macho Adventurer 79

Chapter 7: Putin Is Popular,  
and Not 91



Chapter 8: Putin Is Loyal to His  
Own 103

Chapter 9: Putin's Enemies Don't Always  
Die 115

Chapter 10: Putin Is Just One  
Guy 123

Chapter 11: Does Putin Want  
Out? 133