



The Curse of the Romanovs

Staton Rabin

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Alexei Romanov, heir to the Russian throne, is in deadly danger.

It's 1916, the struggling Russian people are tired of war and are blaming their Romanov rulers for it, and some are secretly plotting to murder the young heir and his family. But nobody outside the palace knows that Alexei suffers from a terrible bleeding disease, hemophilia, which threatens to finish him off even before the family's enemies can. The only person able to help Alexei is the evil and powerful religious mystic Rasputin -- and now Rasputin is trying to kill him too! Desperate, Alexei flees through time to New York City in 2010, using a method taught to him by the mad monk himself.

In New York, Alexei meets smart and sassy Varda Rosenberg, and discovers she is a distant cousin. Varda is working on a gene therapy cure for hemophilia, as the disease still runs in the family. When Alexei learns that history shows that his entire family will be assassinated in 1918, he and Varda travel back in time to the Russian Revolution, with Rasputin hot on their heels. Will they be able to rescue Alexei's family before it's too late?

Staton Rabin lets Alexei tell his own riveting story in a rousing adventure with stunning surprises -- a movingly authentic look at royalty and revolution in the days of the tsars.

The Curse of the Romanovs Details

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Author : Staton Rabin

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From Reader Review The Curse of the Romanovs for online ebook

Blucas215 says

Read this for our Mother/Daughter book club. Interesting book that moved at a fast pace and had a good historical section at the end.

Lyd's Archive (7/15 to 6/18) says

3.5 stars

Food analogy: This book was like a bag of Fritos. I liked it but it doesn't have a lot of substance. The "salt" in this book is decent action scenes and an awful lot of cheesy jokes.

For example:

"What mean this word? Foreign, anti-Bolshevik propaganda?"

"Nyet!" I said. "Livestrong'. It mean... Long live Lenin!"

Wow.

On the Plus Side

This was a short and sweet binge-read-able book which I admit I enjoyed despite its improbabilities. I kind of learned how to suspend disbelief with this one for the most part, but if this book requires so much of that, it really should be a middle grade book. Nevertheless, I enjoyed this book and I did laugh at the culture clash humor. I liked Varda and her sass and learned to get over the whole Jewish-painter thing. Rabin had enough respect for history to research well and include a note, so I'm fine with that.

On the Minus Side

The title was cheesy.

I cringed at this book's opening chapters. Alexei's second-person narration was awfully kiddish, albeit most likely historically accurate, but if she can have him travel in time, she could at least give him a better writing style. I also didn't like how "Alexei" left footnotes instead of just including what he wanted to say in the text.

The worst part of this book by far is Rasputin. We at first think he's a villain but (view spoiler)

Also, this book was cliche, just not in its romance. All cliches of Romanov fiction are present except a magical Fabergé egg and Anastasia having a lover. I also couldn't get over the very middle-grade escape plan, much like that in The Tsarina's Daughter. I also thought a romance between Varda and Alexei didn't

work out.

Overall, though, this was a decent book. It was better than The Fetch or most any other Romanov fantasy I've read recently. Not recommended, but not something I'm against people reading.

Sarah says

I loved this young adult novel until page 85 when the narrator, Alexei Nikolaevich Romanov (son of the last Tsar of Russia) finds himself in New York City in the 21st century with a young girl calling him "dude." To say the transition was abrupt is to call the weather in New Mexico less-than-damp. It is a fatal flaw of the novel, something that makes its entire structure inept. I would have loved a young adult novel about the Romanov family with speculation about the role of Rasputin, but the time travel device is underdeveloped and flawed here. It simply does not work. Staton Rabin is a great writer, but he needed an editor who spoke plainly about the trouble with this story. Then he might have ended up with something really good, rather than this ridiculous farce.

Melissa says

Great historical fiction! The author also provides a thorough section of historical notes at the end of the book.

Claire says

Wow! A friend recommended this book and I thought I wouldn't like it that much, but I really like it!

Bob Rust says

The hemophiliac heir to the Russian throne uses skills taught him by Rasputin to leap forward to the Near Future New York of 2010, where a cure seems imminent.

Kathy Erskine says

A time travel historical novel is not my first choice of book but Rabin does such a fantastic job I was really pulled in and couldn't put it down. GREAT read!

Jena Gardner says

Very good...maybe middle school appropriate. The Romanovs as seen through the eyes of future tsar Alexei. He is able to travel through time to escape certain death and teams up with a relative in the future who is interested in finding a cure for hemophilia. When he learns of his family's fate in a high school history class he travels back through time with his cousin to try to find a way to change the course of history. The author includes outstanding and thorough notes for the reader on what aspects of the story are genuine and what is imagined in addition to good historical notes, medical notes, etc. A very worthwhile read.

Scherrie says

Brilliantly accurate in its portrayal... and yet so enlightening

Becky says

This book would probably be good for kids between 10 and 15, but no adults. The story has some historical value but was just too simple and young. I will give it 3 for kids, but a 2 for adults

Susan says

I really loved this light, interesting read. I absolutely love historical fiction books and learning about some history, so this was the perfect novel for me.

But I must admit, some parts were just too sudden and the characters were inconsistently developed in some way. Like: (WARNING: SPOILERS ARE CONTAINED IN THE NEXT FEW PARAGRAPHS.)

1) Well, I felt that the references of Sherlock Holmes and Tolstoy was sorta awkward for the time period. Yes, the story and novels were during the around the time of Alexei's age, but he was in RUSSIA! How would he possibly know about those books? Hmm...well, perhaps it was translated in Russia or he learned fluent English...but I don't know. If Alexei supposedly was fluent in English, I felt that it was a bit random when he said "Da" all the time...

2) Somewhere in the middle of the book, Alexei asks Varda for her hand in marriage. That was just random as well. Like erm...they're only around fifteen years old and they are already talking about marriage? Plus they're cousins. I'm sorry, but it just doesn't work like that for cousins to marry. I mean, if they had mutual affection for each other like brother and sister, that's okay. But as a couple?

3) And the...ending-ARG!! It bothered me the most. (I could overlook the first two qualities; this book was very random and sudden at some points, but it was the author only trying to create a creative and interesting aspect of the story, so that's alright.) But anyways, back to the ending, it was too sudden! Okay, so here was how it went: Alexei revealed his true self to Varda (as a very old man) and Varda didn't believe him. Until Alexei died right in front of her in his wheelchair, Varda THEN sees the Kevlar cell phone Alexei has and REALIZES that the old man really was Alexi. Like WHHHAATT?!?!?!? I was like THAT'S ITT?!?!?!? Awww...why didn't Varda realize that Alexei was her true love (if they were supposedly going to marry). It was creative how the author made Alexei survive until 2010 to see Varda, but it could have went something like this: (Please excuse my lack of skills as a writer.)

The old man's lifeless hand opened and an object glistened from it. It was a Kevlar cell phone, dented from the bullet and dirty and worn from the years of use. A image struck me by surprise: the initials VER and a double helix flashed up at me. The old man feebly looked at me at that very last moment with his sullen blue eyes wrinkled and worn. He bit his lip and gave a hint of a smile. My eyes widened at the shock; the old man slunk his head down at his chest before I could say a word.

"Oh, my darling Alexei!" (Varda would THEN say next perhaps.)

Because in the story, Varda realizes the old man is Alexei after he dies. I was so depressed about that scene. :(If the author changed the order of events when Alexei realizes the old man in the wheelchair is Alexei and THEN he dies, that I think it would have been different. Because, then, at least Alexei would have found out that all his time of living through the depressing Russian Revolution and searching for Alexei wouldn't have been a waste of a century.

But, the rest of the novel was like, awesome. (: It was very creative and a very nice read. Recommended to readers who love historical fiction (based on true story of Romanovs in Russia), adventure, science fiction (idea of time traveling with the mind), and romance (Alexei + Varda). Believe me, the author does a magnificent job incorporating all of these qualities in this book.

But overall, this novel was more historical fiction. It was based on the history of the Romanovs in Russia before the Russian Revolution. The author portrayed the character Alexei as alive in her historical-fic novel because in real life, Alexei's corpse was missing during the assassination of the Romanov family in 1918, so rumors circulated that Alexei may have escaped. Also, the author included other facts of Alexei, like he was healed by Rasputin since he was hemophiliac. And that Father Rasputin was known as a "Mad Monk." O:

(Note: The book was written in 2007. In this novel, the author portrayed Alexei as living. But, the remains of Alexei were found 2008-2009, suggesting that Alexei was actually most likely to have been killed along with his family in the July 1918. But that is just only SOME evidence.) Who *really* knows if Alexei survived the assassination in 1918? As always, history has its mysteries. That's one of the reasons why I love history and reading about historical novels.

Emily Farrar says

Good. I liked it a lot!

Something about the Romanovs (just like the Holocaust) has always amazed me, and I've always wanted to learn more. I really like this book, a gave you a whole different look of it all.

Kayla D says

This is the most ridiculous book that I have read so far in my 16 years. Everything was absolutely ridiculous that I don't quite know where to start.

To make things easier, let's begin with the characters.

The only Romanov character featured here was Alexei Romanov, the youngest son of Nicholas and Alexandra and the heir to the Russian throne. At the start, I quite enjoyed the Romanov family life. Everything was in place; from Tatiana being a "governess" to Anastasia's naughtiness. Felix Yussupov and

the murder of Rasputin is also featured but that is when the pleasantness of this book ends. As soon as the third chapter rolls around, the Romanovs probably started rolling in their graves.

Alexei lands in 2010 America in a river and he starts yelling for help in Russian. Although not in the Russian that readers would have understood but in Russian as in the Cyrillic alphabet. That's right, Alexei starts shouting in a different alphabet. How the fuck that got through the editor, I have no idea. This is where the historical accuracy of the book also ends. Alexandra, Nicholas II's wife, was the granddaughter of Queen Victoria of England. Knowing that, the Romanov children would have grown up in a somewhat English speaking family and apart from that, they also had a tutor who taught them how to speak in English. So why is it that the minute Alexei arrives in America, he starts speaking in broken English? That part made no fucking sense and was the first sign that this book would turn out to be the most ridiculous thing ever printed. I should have stopped there, but I was being nice and I was hesitant to DNF a book this early on in 2014, but stopping there would have meant that I was saved from such drivel.

God, I should have gone with my guts.

An American girl by the name of Varda saves Alexei from drowning in the river. Varda is 15 and her father was a hemophiliac, meaning that she had an obsession with the disease. Alexei had hemophilia. Coincidence? Of course not. As of 2013, the CDC reports that only 1 in 5,000 males are infected with hemophilia in the United States. It's completely plausible that Alexei stumbles upon a hot girl with a hemophiliac for a father.

On a scale from 1-10, the ridiculousness of this book shoots up to 15 following this.

Varda is searching for a cure for hemophilia. Yes, you heard that. A fucking 15 year old is searching for a fucking cure for fucking hemophilia. Now, I'm all for teenaged empowerment and portraying teens as intelligent human beings but she has a fucking DNA thing contraption in her room and has the fucking resources to conduct gene therapy or whatever mumbo jumbo. Her way of speaking was frequently littered with, "likes" and "dudes" and all the other teenager slang so forgive me if I couldn't believe how a girl like her could have a cure for hemophilia. But that's exactly what she has. The minute she meets Alexei, she announces that she was going to this hemophilia convention where she would be announcing her findings for hemophilia, thus making a cure. I'm sorry but what hell did I just drop into?

Varda doesn't believe that Alexei is the heir to the Russian throne because duh, didn't he die like a million years ago? But then she digs out her DNA testing kit. She has a fucking DNA testing kit in her room. I'm 16 and I don't even have an Erlenmeyer flask in mine.

Then surprise, surprise, Rasputin shows up and announces that he was Alexei's father. Okay, for the fucking record, Nicholas and Alexandra loved each other. They were devoted to each other, so much so that Nicholas literally tore up the country he loved because he continued to listen to his wife's advice even though they were completely wrong. So in what fucking part of the world does Alexandra cheat on Nicholas? And on the same note, in what fucking part of the world did we progress from a Romanov historical fiction to Star Wars?

After learning about the Russian Revolution, Alexei and Varda journey back to Imperial Russia to save the rest of the Romanovs. They are separated but they still have their phones so are able to text each other. For your information, cell phones need cell phone towers and based on the history that everyone in this world is taught, no cell phone towers existed during the 20th century. So how the fuck were Varda and Alexei able to text each other?

Oh right, the walkie talkie concept of their phones. Apparently, Varda and Alexei's cell phones are able to act as a walkie talkie. Hold up, from Star Wars to Spy Kids? My, my, my, aren't we so imaginative? Anyway, this walkie talkie thing still doesn't explain how Alexei was able to text Varda during the last moments of his life. As far as I know, walkie talkies can't text. They don't even have screens, for fuck's sake.

And then there was Varda and Alexei's declaration of love for each other; ILUVU4EVA. ILUVU4EVA2. What the fuck? If a guy texted that to me, he would get a goddamn smack in the balls and not a declaration of love. When was this acceptable in polite society? Hell, did people really do this? Did teenagers? I don't know which "How to understand your teenager better" book Staton Rabin pulled this from but coming from a teenager, this has never happened to me. Not the declaration of love, but the complete disregard and utter butchering of the English language. My God, ILUVU4EVA??? That defines long lasting love? That's love that transcends time? If so, I weep for humanity.

Cheesy. Stupid. Ridiculous. These are the words that would best describe The Curse of the Romanovs.

The only thing that made this deserve a one star rating was the ending wherein the author put in the real history of the Romanovs, pointing out what she changed and so on. That was more interesting than the actual story.

I do not recommend this book at all. I'm sorry if I cursed way too much in this review but this was the only way I could really get out my feelings for this book. If you ever see a copy of *The Curse of the Romanovs*, kill it before it breeds.

Leah says

<http://theprettygoodgatsby.wordpress....>

I was born in 1904 and on my *nynok* the fate of Mother Russia was written.

It's no secret I have a slight obsession with The Romanovs. When I saw this book on a shelf at work, I had some reservations (the cover doesn't appeal to me at all - it's hard to see in the picture, but on the pendant is a very obvious pasted-on portrait of Alexei Romanov, the author was completely unknown to me although that necessarily isn't a bad thing, and the plot seemed a little iffy), but knew one way or another I'd wind up reading it. It's an extremely quick read: the main story is only 247 pages with another **26** pages of author's notes. Had I read it on a day I was off it would have been a great afternoon read. Instead, it took all of two days.

The book opens with Alexei Romanov, heir to the throne of Russia, penning the 'true story' of his family. With a revolution on the horizon, many rumors and false truths are being spread about his family and their treatment of their people.

One thing I thought was really neat about this novel was the way the footnotes were presented. They were added into the margins, rather than the bottom of the page. This made reading much faster. Unfortunately, it seemed that after a few chapters, the footnotes stopped altogether, despite a fair bit of Russian thrown into conversations.

Nynok means belly-button!

Just then Papa's face lit up in an angel's smile. And I knew that my mother must have walked into the room.

Only she could make him smile like that.

♥ I've said it before and I'll say it again: Nicky & Alix = my OTP y'all.

War has hit Russia and the Romanovs are no longer safe. Add to this the threat of Alexei's disease - hemophilia - being discovered. No one outside the palace knows of his affliction and the only one able to heal him is Grigory Rasputin, a monk. For the first half of the book, facts presented followed the actual history quite nicely, which I enjoyed. Then the odd time-travel aspect came into play.

Rasputin lets Alexei in on a little secret: Alexei only has to close his eyes and concentrate and he'll travel through the waters of time (pretty literally in fact). However, he must only travel with his mind. Should he travel with his body, he will become stuck and unable to return home.

After a assassination attempt gone wrong (it's actually really fascinating reading about all the tries made to end Rasputin's life. The man seriously could not be killed!), Alexei finds himself at the river's edge with a none-too-pleased monk.

"Look, you can use this to reach me anytime you want. You listen here, and you talk here. Just press this button and it'll ring the spare phone I've got on me. You know - 'telephone'?"

"Of course I know telephone! I am not from Stone Age!"

Alexei awakens to discover he did not drown like he had assumed. In fact, there is a strange girl kissing him. After a few confused moments, he finds out that the girl was not kissing him, she was simply administering CPR and he is in America. New York to be precise.

Varda, the girl who rescued him from the river, insists on taking him to a nearby hospital. However, Alexei adamantly refuses; no one can ever know the tsarevitch is unwell. In the end, she offers to take him to her house instead and it is at this point the book lost me.

From the very first page Alexei informed the reader he is writing in English in the event his notebook were to fall into enemy hands. The tsarina was Queen Victoria's granddaughter and she grew up speaking English. She spoke exclusively in English to her children. Alexei's writing for the first half of the book was fine, fluent. The moment he found himself in New York, however, his English (both his writing and his speech) became very stunted and broken. While it wasn't hard to understand him, I had a difficult time believing it. There are stacks of letters that Nicholas & Alix wrote to one another (that still survive to this day) that were in English. The fact that Alexei's English would suddenly be anything but fluent didn't sit right with me.

I also had a difficult time believing that Varda, a regular 15 year old girl, would have the resources to conduct her own experiments on gene therapy and have a possible cure for hemophilia. When she finds Alexei, she tells him she's set to attend a hemophilia conference where she'll announce her findings. This girl is fifteen. And with all of her 'likes' and 'dudes' thrown into her sentences, I just don't see this girl being the

brilliant scientist she's purported to be.

"ILUVU4EVA."

Varda understandable doesn't believe that the boy before her is actually the tsarevitch of Russia who was murdered in 1918. However, she whips out her handy dandy science lab and runs a DNA test. Surprise! He actually is a Romanov! Double surprise! So is Varda. The two are distant cousins, but true love laughs in the face of genetics. The day after they meet, Alexei has breakfast with Varda's mother and mentions wanting to marry Varda. Yeah.

Alexei attends school with Varda one day and nearly has a meltdown in history class. The subject of the day is Russian history, specifically the revolution. Because Alexei had left his time a few years previously, he was unaware of the "new" revolution and is horrified upon finding out the tsar and his family were brutally murdered.

There's a random subplot thrown in with Rasputin. He somehow survived and follows Alexei through time. He appears at Varda's school and disguises himself as a janitor. Later - and I didn't like this part at **all** - he pulls the "I am your father" card with Alexei.

The pair go *back* in time and attempt to rescue the Romanovs. Alexei and Varda wind up getting separated, but they still have their phones and Alexei is the one to text that lovely declaration of love. There was *much* eye-rolling on my part.

I won't give away the ending, but I will say that part of me was surprised. I could see the story going two ways and I guess I subconsciously hadn't wanted what actually happened to happen. But it did and that's what the reader is left to deal with.

There were many overly cheesey parts in *The Curse of the Romanovs*, but it was an extremely quick read and the first half was far more enjoyable - and based in fact! The second half didn't appeal to me nearly as much and I had to push myself to get through certain scenes. The author has a few other books - none of them dealing with the Romanovs it seems - but I don't think I'll be reading any of them.

Favorite Quotes:

"They will think I'm a coward if I don't fight! Father Grigory's son is a soldier! How can we ask the people to send their sons if you won't send yours?"

"Romanov family trust me some day to run whole country. I think you can trust me with telephone."

Emme Forbes says

This is a great book...I love to hear about Anastasia and her family, but this has a twist.
