



The Last Romanov

Dora Levy Mossanen

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She was an orphan, ushered into the royal palace on the prayers of her majesty. Yet, decades later, her time spent in the embrace of the Romanovs haunts her still. Is she responsible for those murderous events that changed everything?

If only she can find the heir, maybe she can put together the broken pieces of her own past - maybe she can hold on to the love she found.

Bursting to life with the rich and glorious marvels of Imperial Russia, *The Last Romanov* is a magical tale of second chances and royal blood.

The Last Romanov Details

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From Reader Review The Last Romanov for online ebook

Judy & Marianne from Long and Short Reviews says

Originally posted at: <http://www.longandshortreviews.blogspot.com/2013/07/the-last-romanov-by-dora-levy.html>...

What could happen in today's Russia if there had been a surviving member of the Romanov family? This is the question that Dora Levy Mossanen asks in *The Last Romanov*. She takes you through the last years of the Imperial Couple's rule, up to the moment of their execution... and possible survival of the teenaged Tsarevich, Alexis Romanov. Prepare yourself for one wild ride through history as Darya tells her tale and makes her search for the missing Tsarevich!

Darya believes it's her divine destiny to guard and protect the young Tsarevich Alexis Romanov from everything that might possibly oppose his eventual ascension to the Imperial throne of Russia. She's so focused on her duty to the royal family that she often sacrifices things important to her for their benefit. While this is an honorable and often required trait in a member of the royal household, it also shows a single-mindedness that might not always make for a good companion, either. She lets her care of, and eventual search for, Alexis Romanov consume the remainder of her life. Darya is, on the other hand, a loyal and caring caretaker to Alexis as well as a devout and dedicated soul.

Darya's one distraction from the young Tsarevich and the Imperial Family is her one true love, Avram. Their romance is fiery and passionate, made even more so by the fact that he is a forbidden Jew. For someone of her standing to be involved with a commoner was unheard of at that time, but for this commoner to also be a Jew? It was pure scandal. Darya and Avram do not let this come between them, however, showing both grace and the strength of true love to overcome all obstacles. The way they keep finding one another, despite the odds and political crisis of the time, is both magical and hope for us all.

However, despite Darya's complete obsession with the young Tsarevich and what became of him, her story is one of the most interesting I've read in a long time. This era of history, and the Romanov family itself, has long been a curiosity of mine. To find such an imaginative and intriguing story set during this time and involving this family was a happy surprise for me. Filled with both wild and the more sedate historical characters plus just a touch of the mystical, *The Last Romanov* brings magic and history together in a spectacular way.

The Last Romanov is a wonderfully well-written read for any lover of history or even just someone who believes in the impossible.

Amy Lignor says

Perhaps this book was given to the wrong reviewer, because I opened the pages already thrilled with what I was about to read. To me, there is nothing more interesting than the end of the Romanov dynasty - Nicholas II and Alexandra meeting up with the mad monk, Rasputin. This particular true historical story is still one of the most fascinating to be found in fiction.

In 1991, Darya Spiridova receives a knock on her door. There, standing in front of her, is a man in uniform who has an official letter, telling her of a secret meeting that the Russian Nobility Association is going to have. These are the people, like Darya, who wish to bring Mother Russia back. In order to do so, they must find a descendant of the royal Romanov blood to put back on the throne.

Darya is not a normal modern-day Russian, nor was she normal back when she was a Romanov favorite and lived in the palace looking after their only son and the heir to the Russian throne. Yes, she is now one hundred and four years-old, and Darya looks as if she hasn't aged a day. Although many believe she is a witch because of her one opal eye that sees all, she is far more than just that. She lives with her 'Little Servant' inside the old Entertainment Palace, where Nicholas and Alexandra held symphonies and ballets; the only Imperial residence that was not confiscated when Russia came to an end. The palace is surrounded by multiplying butterflies, which many see as the Romanov spirits that still haunt the land. And one of the conversation pieces of the book is the tiny Faberge egg that hangs around Darya's neck, which gives off a scent that is beyond anyone's imagination as to what it really is.

As the readers find themselves at this emergency meeting, they also begin to get the entire story of the Romanov's - the birth of their only son - and the frightening end to the family as they got caught up in the world of Rasputin, and were finally killed to make way for a new Russia. Darya believes that the Tsar's son was not killed that night in the House of Special Purpose, and she is intent on finding the young boy who suffered from hemophilia and was watched over by a monk who seemed to know Darya's every thought.

Yes, I could go on and on forever, but the best sum-up of this incredible story is imaginative, thrilling, interesting, fast-paced - with characters that will have you glued to every page as you relive a historical time period that will always remain the perfect blend of myth, truth and fantasy. Enjoy!

Until Next Time,
Amy

Tatyana says

If you know anything about Russian history, don't read this book, it will infuriate you with its stupidity and inability to collect simple facts which are available online. For a while, I tried to pretend that this was a fantasy novel, but it does not work on this level either.

Here is a quote from page 8: "The Entertainment palace in Ekaterinbourg was the only residence the communists and anti monarchists did not confiscate for fear of multiplying butterflies they regarded as the lingering spirits of the Romanovs." Well, it is a pity that some readers would think that this is "a well-researched historical novel." It pains me to imagine that somebody who is not familiar with Russian history would get introduced to the story of the Romanovs in such a contorted way.

Ron says

I usually give a book 100 pages before I give up. I nearly quit at page 71 on this story, but pressed ahead as it

(momentarily) got interesting. I can't believe I read the whole thing.

A confused jumble. There's certainly a story in there somewhere, perhaps a good one, of the end of the Romanov royal family of Russia and potential (in a fantasy way) modern fallout. But the telling was not up to the concept. The primary stumbling block seems to be the author's inability to tell a story of a hundred years ago without such jarringly modern terms and characters that it kept knocking the reader out of the story. Clumsy. Too much back story. (Yeah, I know, the whole story was back story, but still...)

Phraseology: "...she lets loose laughter...", "plants a kiss", "...to live as one with wild life" (walking with a rifle over her shoulder, ready to blast said wildlife).

A thriving population of Aurochs in Russia in 1884? (They've been extinct since 1627.) The magical properties of ambergris? Sure, why not? "A clove of cinnamon"?

Likewise, while she manages to create a feeling of authenticity around the Romanovs, her fictional cast is too twenty-first century. Her Rasputin comes off more like a dirty old con man than either holy or crazy. Mossanen seems to have a good feeling for her characters, she just can't convey it into words.

Even two stars would be a gift. This could have been a really good read; it's not.

Ludodreamer says

Un fantasy storico trovato per caso nel reparto dell'usato al Libraccio, ma che ho acquistato quasi ad occhi chiusi dopo aver letto la trama.

Infatti, credo sia stato proprio un segno del destino perché mi è piaciuto tantissimo.

Consigliato a tutti coloro che hanno amato il film d'animazione Anastasia, poiché il libro è come se fosse la sua versione al maschile, in quanto l'erede scomparso dei Romanov non è la granduchessa, bensì Aleksej. La protagonista è Darja, una donna di 104 anni che racconta di essere stata l'istitutrice del piccolo zarevic. Vive in un palazzo fatiscente, un tempo appartenuto alla famiglia reale, e tutti si chiedono come abbia fatto a sopravvivere alla strage del 1918, ma soprattutto come possa essere ancora così giovane, dato che non dimostra più di trent'anni.

Infatti, il romanzo si articola in flashback e scene ambientate nel presente in cui Darja vive, ovvero il 1991, anno della caduta dell'Unione Sovietica.

Un aspetto che ho apprezzato moltissimo è la fedeltà storica nei fatti narrati. Durante la lettura, ho ritrovato tutti gli avvenimenti studiati a scuola o che conoscevo per cultura personale, e si sono intrecciati in maniera perfetta alla storia che Darja (personaggio di fantasia) voleva raccontare.

L'ho trovato un libro completo: c'è la politica, l'aspetto artistico, la storia d'amore, la superstizione, grande protagonista nella famiglia Romanov.

Inoltre, penso che l'autrice sia stata molto abile nel caratterizzare i componenti della famiglia: la zarina Aleksandra, così devota alla religione, lo zar Nicola II, incapace di governare un Paese e ne segnerà la sua rovina anche dopo l'abdicazione. Da ciò che ho letto in giro, anche le granduchesse sono state riprodotte fedelmente all'interno del romanzo, dunque questo mi ha resa felice perché il tutto risultava credibile.

Poi c'è lui, il mio preferito: RASPUTIN.

Vi dirò, è stato strano leggere del mio alter ego, soprattutto perché non era quel rottame che cade a pezzi del film, bensì l'uomo viscido e promiscuo realmente esistito.

Tuttavia, la scrittrice è riuscita a trasmettere quel senso di inquietudine durante le sue scene, dunque gli ha

reso giustizia lo stesso.

Darja mi è piaciuta come personaggio, ed è stato interessante scoprire da dove provenissero i suoi poteri.

Comunque, il romanzo mi ha trasmesso un po' di tristezza perché la storia della famiglia Romanov rimane la stessa in tutte le sue versioni, quindi non è stato facile leggere la scena dell'esecuzione o anche l'uccisione di Rasputin.

Infine, trovo che il finale sia giusto, poiché essendo uno stand-alone, mi sta bene che sia leggermente aperto e lasci libera immaginazione al lettore.

Nella mia mente, Darja ha ricominciato a invecchiare, e trascorre gli ultimi anni della sua longeva vita al fianco del piccolo (ma ormai grande) zarevic, Aleksej.

5 stelline più che meritate.

Ashley Arthur says

This is another book I found out about through the Nook “Free Book Friday” program. I downloaded it a few weeks ago, but I hesitated to start it for a while – maybe because my knowledge of the Romanovs was limited to the animated movie “Anastasia” from 1997. Once I got started, though, I found the story fascinating.

The story is about an elderly woman, Darya, who is nearly a hundred years old and determined to find out if Alexi Romanov survived the night that the Bolsheviks slaughtered his parents and sisters. When Darya was a teenager, the Tsarina invited her to live with the royal family in order to look after Alexi, who had hemophilia. For over fifteen years, Darya makes Alexi the center of her world, and eventually she views the Romanovs as her family. It's interesting to watch the historical events from 1903-1918 evolve from Darya's perspective.

When I first started reading, I wasn't sure what to make of the character Darya. The author describes her as having an “opal eye” and she's followed everywhere by butterflies. She also has mysterious visions of the “Ancient One.” I didn't know if I was supposed to believe that Darya was a witch or that she was crazy, but then I read an interview with Mossanen where she characterizes this book as a work of magical realism, and things made a little more sense. Mossanen's description of life with the imperial family is so rich, and their lives seem like something out of a fairy tale. She does a great job of contrasting that style of description with the crude, violent reality ushered in by the Bolshevik revolution. There is a love story in the novel, but this is definitely not a “bodice ripper” historical romance. Overall, I thought this was a good read.

Misfit says

[Darya sniffed the ambergris and went into a trance and went back in time whilst Rasputin is fondling her was just a bit too much for my tastes. (hide spoiler)]

Wendy Hines says

Rarely has a book captivated me the way this one has. The Romanov story has been told several times, but I can assure you never in this fashion. This book offers a fresh perspective as well as a healthy dose of Russian history. Intrigue, romance, violence...you couldn't ask for more. A strong beginning sucks you right in and

each chapter leaves you craving more. I wasn't able to put it down until I'd devoured every page.

Instead of turning the era and mystery into a myth, Mossanen takes the Romanovs and those surrounding them and turns them into real people. Instead of focusing on Anastasia, we're focused on Darya, who some believe to be a sorceress. She is definitely one of a kind and worth reading the book for.

I strongly suggest this book for anyone interested in the Romanov era. Those who love history, art, mysteries, romance and the supernatural will adore this book as well.

My Book Addiction and More MBA says

THE LAST ROMANOV by Dora Levy Mossanen is an impressive historical fiction set in Russia. This is the story of the Romanov's, a Royal family and the orphan left behind. It is written with vivid descriptions and details that brings Imperial Russia, the Royal family and the Romanov's to life. A story of mystery, redemption, prophecy, myths, a royal family, murder, second chances, magic and tragedy. So sit back and enjoy your journey with "The Last Romanov" you will not regret it and will learn volumes. Ms. Mossanen has a way of drawing the reader into this story as she weaves history with mystery, and magic. I would recommend "The Last Romanov" to anyone who enjoys history, Russian history, fantasy, Empress Alexandra, Anastasia, Tudor fiction, and Russian Royals. A wonderful read for all! Received for an honest review from the publisher. Details can be found at Sourcebooks Landmark, the author's website, and My Book Addiction and More.

RATING: 4

HEAT RATING: SWEET

REVIEWED BY: AprilR, My Book Addiction and More

Roberta says

Darya Borodina Spiridova was born with the howls of wild aurochs echoing in the forest. These same great beasts brought tragedy and change to her life while she was still young. After her parents' tragic deaths, Darya is taken in by the Nicholas and Alexandra Romanov and becomes part of the everyday life of the Imperial family.

Darya was born with one opal eye. This, along with a secret ingredient kept in a locket, seem to give her special healing powers. These gifts are no match for the congenital disease that affects the heir to the Russian throne. Does Darya bring ruin to the royal family when Rasputin is brought in to heal the Tsarevich, or is it fate? After witnessing, yet miraculously escaping, the execution of the Imperial family, Darya believes Alexei has also survived. She spends the rest of her long life looking for the "last Romanov" in hopes of bringing back the glory of Russia before the Bolsheviks.

The author takes a true historical story that has fascinated both scholars and everyday readers for years and

adds a twist of magic realism. I have not always been a big fan of magic realism, but it is perfect for this novel.

The horrific scenes of real life history are balanced by the vivid, lyrical descriptions of aurochs, butterflies, birds of paradise and lovely jewels.

Darya is a fascinating heroine who is capable of great passion and unconditional love. Her quest for justice and personal redemption is told as the author weaves a story back and forth in time over a period of 104 years.

Dory Levy Mossanen is the author of two other historical novels, HAREM and COURTESAN. I will be adding these to my to be read pile. I know they will captivate me, just as THE LAST ROMANOV did.

Christy says

3.5

This book was an unusual read for me but I was interested because I have always been fascinated by the Romanov's. The books is interesting...even a little well weird at times but the story was engaging and you wanted to know what happens. The author writes quite differently from many others and it leads to an intriguing story.

DeAnna says

Like its heroine's inexplicable opal eye, THE LAST ROMANOV by Dora Levy Mossanen shimmers with tantalizing mystery and brilliance. Readers will delight in sharing the journey of the bold and self-possessed Darya through the corridors of the Russian Imperial palace during the final days of the Tsar's reign as she cares for the young and sickly heir, finds herself the beloved muse of a celebrated Jewish artist, and grapples with Rasputin's revelations about her ancient past. Filled with rich period detail, THE LAST ROMANOV is a testament to the enduring power of love and honor, but most of all, hope.

ILoveBooks says

Author Dora Levy Mossanen will have a wide audience for this book, the mystery behind the royal Romanov deaths is fascinating to so many. The author weaves a captivating tale starring Darya, a woman close to the Imperial Family. Early on, Rasputin imparts a disturbing prophecy to Darya...one that keeps Darya on her toes for decades. Constantly in search for Tsarevich Alexis, Darya's entire life is devoted to that one goal.

Darya's character is interesting. She isn't the normal character one finds in books, she is intriguing to readers outside of the story and to characters inside of the story. Darya has a special place in her heart for Alexis as she looked after him in the Palace. She has one opal eye that apparently sees all and appears not to have aged a day. Darya's reasons for bringing back Alexis are not entirely selfish, she wishes to restore Mother Russia to her former glory. Her sheer determination and steely perseverance are traits to be admired and that will astound the reader. The other characters on not focused upon so much as characters in a history book, they are described and developed very well-the reader will feel close to many of them.

The events in this book are exciting and fit together like puzzle pieces. The reader will be surprised by the twists and surprises in this novel. This book is recommended to young adult/adult readers.

CJ says

I have a fascination with the Russian royal family. The tragedy surrounding their deaths has always fascinated me and I've read a lot of what's been published, novels as well as histories/biographies. I was excited to see this one - a story I'm familiar with told from a different perspective sucks me in every time. Unfortunately, I cannot recommend this book.

The piece Mossanen adds to the story is a woman from the fringe. Her parents were friends of the Romanovs, but of course not of their social standing. When Darya becomes an orphan, she is brought to the palace to look after the Tsarevitch. What follows is a descent into mysticism, as if there wasn't enough of that in the real Romanov palaces.

I didn't buy it. I didn't believe that Darya's powers came from the ambergris. I didn't believe she would stay in the same city where her beloved royal family was murdered. I didn't believe she would pine for her lost love (like some Russian Miss Havisham) for decades.

I can't tell you why I finished it. I think on some level I keep wanting the end of the story to be different. This book was unsatisfying on almost every level for me.

Jen says

This book can be summarized in these three words: Of Crap Piece. Though you may have to rearrange them.

So I'm going to completely summarize the crapfest that was this book. Because then you won't read them. I read this book and finished it to protect you. LOVE ME.

Meet Darya. Her name means "the sea" oooh. She was conceived when her dad/mom met and then went all naughty during an auroch hunt. Oh did I mention that her mom was a noble named Sabrina Josephine and her family had all the pink diamonds...in Italy.

Quick fun fact: there are no diamond mines in Italy and there's not actually diamond mines that solely produce pink diamonds.

Her dad was a Russian cousin to the tsar named Boris...because all Russian noble guys are named Boris. So Sabrina and Boris go on an auroch hunt.

*Quick fun fact from wiki: The aurochs (/aʊrəks/ or /aʊrəks/; also urus, (*Bos primigenius*), the ancestor of domestic cattle, is an extinct type of large wild cattle that inhabited Europe, Asia and North Africa; they survived in Europe until the last recorded aurochs, a female, died in the Jaktorów Forest, Poland in 1627.*

Yep. Extinct. BUT WAIT...there's more. Sab & Boris get it on and exactly nine months later they have a kid in the forest. Somewhere in that time, they had gotten married without anyone counting on their fingers or Sab's pink diamond daddy getting all pissy that his pink diamond had gotten scuffed while hunting extinct animals. Oh and it appears the tsarina just found it all peachy.

So their kid Darya was born with an opal eye. I have no idea what this would look like but it was orangy or some sort. I don't know. It wasn't really explained, nor did it alter her depth deception, but it seems the little tsarlings liked to poke her in opal eye. Whatevs.

Then on her b-day when she's 16 or something, her parents take her auroch hunting without rifles. Because who needs rifles when you're hunting extinct creatures. When I go Dodo wrasslin', I just bring a paper clip, and I'm fine.

However, her parents aren't fine.

They get gored by the extinct aurochs, which has to be a first.

Tsarina then appoints Darya of the whanky eye to guard over the Tsarevich, because she can cure. Also she sets up an artist thing for the tsar and tsarina, at which she poses nude, which does not seem to bother anyone. Because who doesn't want to carve/paint/ballet a chick with a whanky eye. She then starts sleeping with one of the painters.

Oh, and this is important. Darya loves ambergris. And her mom had a necklace with some in it.

So the painter, who is Jewish, and Darya are IN LOVE. And she get's preggers...4 mos preggers and no one notices. Until she loses the kid (again, no one notices) and never tells painter dude. She also meets rasputin, finds a hunk of ambergris, and figures out she's the reincarnation of a Jewish Queen who betrayed her people. OHHHHHNNOOOOESSS.

She also learns that Ambergris can do cool things...like cure hemophilia and stop bullets...but more on the bullet stopping power later.

So she cures Alexei with reg doses of ambergris--because that would totes work.

INSERT REVOLUTION

In the midst her opal eye cracks. This sounds gross, but it's her pain at mother russia. Rasputin sends her seeds before getting killed, and she'll know when to use them and she travels with her hunk of ambergris with the family to Tobolsk..and then Ekaterinaberg. When the shooting happens she's there but puts her big hunk of ambergris in front of Alexei. BECAUSE AMBERGRIS STOPS BULLETS.

Then the painter dude finds her and saves her and takes her to a palace where she plants the seeds that raspy

gave her and they grow hallucinogenic berries in one day. Which makes her life peachy and she settles down in a palace with no one noticing her with her whanky eye.

However she knows Alexei is alive, because AMBERGRIS CAN STOP BULLETS (and cure hemophilia).

She's now 104 and they bring her because there's a guy claiming the throne and only Darya would know him.

The convo between her and the claimant is something like this.

"you're not alexei"

"nope, nicholas banged the dancer while at the camp, I'm their grandson"

"but you can't get the throne the dancer was Jewish--so you're Jewish"

"no i'm not"

"yes you are"

"no I'm not"

"dude...check your pants."

"oh. MAZEL TOV...but i know where alexei is."

So Darya goes off to find him and he's in his 80s, almost out of ambergris (WHICH CAN STOP BULLETS AND CURE HEMOPHILIA), and living with relatives of Jewish painter dude who shot himself outside of Darya's house while she was taking a bath. Alexei has brain of 13 year old...which oddly ambergris can't cure. Then she goes off and dies while seeing her auroch killed mom and dad and dead jewish guy.

The end.

Thank god, I didn't pay for it.
