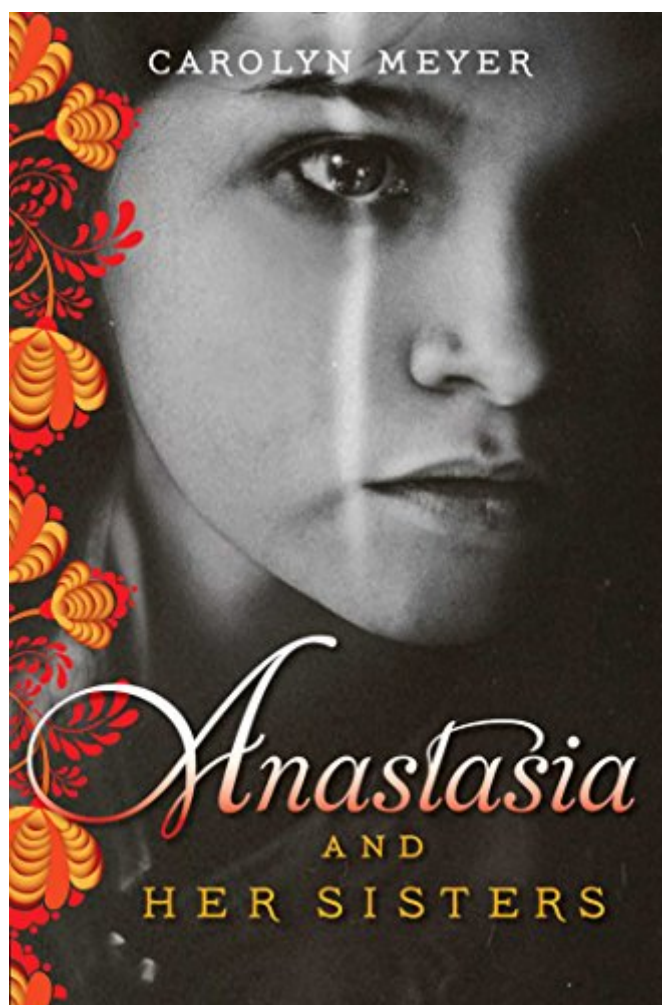


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Anastasia And Her Sisters



Synopsis

There's a heavy price to pay for royalty in this compelling and true story of Anastasia Romanov and her fellow grand duchesses of Russia, from an award-winning novelist. It's summer in 1914 and the Romanovs are aboard the Standart, the Russian royal yacht. Tsar Nicholas, Tsaritsa Alexandra, their four daughters, and the youngest child, Tsarevitch Alexei, are sailing to Romania to meet Crown Prince Carol and his parents. It seems like a fairy tale existence for the four grand duchesses, dressed in beautiful clothes, traveling from palace to palace. But it's not. Life inside the palace is far from a fairy tale. The girls' younger brother suffers from an excruciatingly painful and deadly blood disease, and their parents have chosen to shield the Russian people from the severity of the future tsar's condition. The secrets and strain are hard on the family, and conditions are equally dire beyond the palace walls. Peasants suffer under the burden of extreme poverty and Tsar Nicholas's leadership power weakens. And when the unthinkable happens—Germany declares war on Russia—nothing in Anastasia's world will ever be the same.

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Customer Reviews

Anastasia and her sisters' collective and individual stories have fallen prey to both mythology and writers wild imaginings. Tales of escape and recognition, such as the three "Anastasia" films (starring Ingrid Bergman, Amy Irving, and Meg Ryan, respectively), and sexualizing of the young grand duchesses (as happened to Anastasia herself in "Anastasia's Secret" by Susanne Dunlap) have contributed to a false and negative image of these of these four extraordinary lives. Sarah Miller's "The Lost Crown" stands out as the only novel to do full justice to these young women - until now. "Anastasia and Her Sisters", whilst narrated by Anastasia, is really about all four them; Olga, in particular, is almost like a "secondary" narrator with Anastasia's constant thumbing through her secret diary throughout this beautiful novel. Starting in 1911 and ending just before their brutal assassination, the book follows these sisters' privileged yet relatively normal lives as daughters of the richest man on Earth. They live in great palaces by the sea and attend opulent balls, have private tutors, wear pretty dresses, and want for nothing, yet they are as relatable as any YA heroine---four young women to strive to be like and to look up to. They have their crushes and little romances based in the historical record (i.e. the story of Olga and Paul Voronov, tenderly depicted in this novel), fights with their mother like any normal girls, indicate strong compassion for everyone around them, have their own talents they hone, and love and respect each other, their parents, and brother. Four amazingly different personalities bloom in this novel: Olga the romantic and smart one, Tatiana the practical and helpful one, Maria the sweet and talented one, and, of course Anastasia, the mischievous and artistic one. Not only does this book offer rich description and psychological insight into the girls', it also evokes the lost fairy tale world of the imperial Romanov court with lavish imagery and a colorful cast of "supporting" historical characters, like Aunt Olga, Rasputin, Dowager Empress, Dmitri Pavlovich, etc. A heartfelt read worthy of any lover of history's time and attention. Recommended further reading: "Maria and Anastasia: Their Letters, Diaries, Postcards" by Helen Azar.

I recently discovered and became obsessed with Carolyn Meyers and her fabulous books. "Anastasia and Her Sisters" is the latest one I have read. She is masterful at historical fiction, and it is evident that she is meticulous with her research. In this book, she breathes life into the tragic figures of the Romanov family who once ruled Russia. I was so enthralled I could not put it down. Her inclusion in the story of Rasputin and his relationship with the imperial family was utterly fascinating. A wonderful read, but a sad ending.

A interesting book about the Romanovs. Always thought that Olga, Tatiana and Marie were treated as unimportant, over shadowed by Anastasia. Very nice to see all four treated equally.

This book was very captivating. It was hard to stop reading. The information was also captivating. I loved also learning about other books by a great author

I don't think I'll ever read enough books about the Romanov family - especially when it comes to the Grand Duchesses. Carolyn Meyer is no stranger to turning the stories of historical characters into works of fiction (she does stick close to the facts but also takes a creative license when telling these stories), nor is she a stranger to Anastasia Romanov having years ago written *Anastasia: The Last Grand Duchess* for The Royal Diaries series roughly 15 years ago. Having read that novel way back when, *Beauty's Daughter: The Story of Hermione and Helen of Troy* last January, and having two additional novels of Carolyn's on my shelf I knew I couldn't pass up her latest installment. Carolyn tells the last years of the Romanov rule through Anastasia's eyes as she is probably the most well known of the sisters, a fact we can most likely thank all the imposters claiming to be her and having survived the massacre of her family in 1918. The novel begins in 1918 as Anastasia, two of her sisters, and a family friend "dispose of the medicines" - their code for hiding their jewels by sewing them into their clothing - before backtracking to the year 1911 and coming full circle. Anastasia's story focuses on the lives of the sisters, especially Olga as Anastasia finds herself constantly reading Olga's secret diary, and strays away from the political aspects of the time. Nicholas and Alexandra kept their children rather in the dark when it came to what was happening in Russia outside of their family and small group of friends and were daily dressed alike by their mother (even well into their teens and early adulthood) so it makes sense that *Anastasia and Her Sisters* makes little notes of these historical aspects. We spend seven years with the Romanov family and Anastasia's voice grows and changes throughout that time. She goes from talking about her hatred of school and dreaming of balls to understanding that things are not right in Russia even though she doesn't fully grasp what this means for herself and her family. Her thoughts go from surface level to deeper thought and it's this growth and development that adds to the reading experience. Every time I read a novel about the Romanovs it's hard not to feel emotional. By adding a certain level of depth and characterization, Carolyn makes the emotion even stronger. We're not just reading about their exile, we're feeling their exile. We're sitting in Tobolsk, staring out the windows to our friends in the house across the street but able to talk with them; we're at Ipatiev House with only a half hour of daily exercise in an enclosed garden and our windows painted over to keep us isolated. This isn't a

nonfiction biography that spews out facts (don't get me wrong, love those too), but a historical novel that gives these characters life.

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