

Honors World History I- Summer Reading Assignment

Title: The Curse of the Romanovs

Author: Staton Rabin

The Curse of the Romanovs is a historical fantasy novel about Alexi Romanov- the teenage hemophiliac who is heir to the Russian throne in 1916- and his 15 year old American cousin from 2010, who meet in modern day New York City and go on a desperate mission back in time to the 1918 Russian Revolution, to try to rescue Alexi's kidnapped family before they can be assassinated by the Bolsheviks.

The time frame that is covered by this book is beyond the scope of our course, but this acclaimed book is one of the best examples of young-adult historical fiction published in the recent past. Even though this is a work of fiction, it has been reviewed by historians for accuracy and includes extensive notes that clearly separate fact from fiction.

As you read the book, please write out answers to the following questions:

1. Why do you think the author chose to tell this story in the first person?
2. Give several examples of "surprises" in the plot of the book. Were you surprised by these developments or were you able to guess them in advance?
3. While Alexi is the 'hero' of the book he is also portrayed as having some faults. What are some of them? What are some of the positive traits of Rasputin, the 'villain'?
4. Blood is a motif (recurring theme) in the book. Give at least four examples of the many ways that "blood" is used in this story, both figuratively and literally.

Also, complete the following assignment:

Choose a famous figure out of history. Write a short story about what would happen if this person came to visit you in 2009. What would you show or teach them? What would they have trouble adjusting to or understanding? What would surprise them or shock them about our world?

Please type your answers to the questions and the short story assignment. I will be looking for evidence that you have carefully read and thought about the book as well as that you are writing at the 'honors' level. All of this work will be due at the end of the first full week of classes in September; I will give you a specific date in class.

Enjoy the book and your summer; let me know if you have questions. See you in September!
Mr. Naughton (nnaughton@achs.net)