



Secret Lives of the Tsars: Three Centuries of Autocracy, Debauchery, Betrayal, Murder, and Madness from Romanov Russia

Michael Farquhar

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“Michael Farquhar doesn’t write about history the way, say, Doris Kearns Goodwin does. He writes about history the way Doris Kearns Goodwin’s smart-ass, reprobate kid brother might. I, for one, prefer it.”—Gene Weingarten, two-time Pulitzer Prize winner and *Washington Post* columnist

Scandal! Intrigue! Cossacks! Here the world’s most engaging royal historian chronicles the world’s most fascinating imperial dynasty: the Romanovs, whose three-hundred-year reign was remarkable for its shocking violence, spectacular excess, and unimaginable venality. In this incredibly entertaining history, Michael Farquhar collects the best, most captivating true tales of Romanov iniquity. We meet Catherine the Great, with her endless parade of virile young lovers (none of them of the equine variety); her unhinged son, Paul I, who ordered the bones of one of his mother’s paramours dug out of its grave and tossed into a gorge; and Grigori Rasputin, the “Mad Monk,” whose mesmeric domination of the last of the Romanov tsars helped lead to the monarchy’s undoing. From Peter the Great’s penchant for personally beheading his recalcitrant subjects (he kept the severed head of one of his mistresses pickled in alcohol) to Nicholas and Alexandra’s brutal demise at the hands of the Bolsheviks, *Secret Lives of the Tsars* captures all the splendor and infamy that was Imperial Russia.

Praise for Michael Farquhar’s *Behind the Palace Doors*

“[A] rollicking account of kings and queens gone wild.”—*People*

“Farquhar’s style is a breezy pleasure throughout.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“A terrifically accessible history.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

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