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The Kitchen Boy, by Robert Alexander, Penguin,
2004

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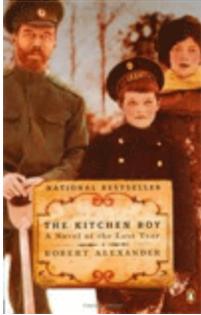
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Recommended Readings



The Kitchen Boy: A Novel of the Last Tsar

by Robert Alexander, Penguin, 2004

Reviewed by Lacey Echols

The Kitchen Boy, by Robert Alexander, is a novel about the final days of the last tsar, Nicholas Romanov and his wife Alexandra, and the family's imprisoned existence after the revolution in 1919. The story is told from the perspective of the young kitchen boy, Leonka, who lived in the house of detention with the family during this time. He was able to leave the house to run errands and also to deliver messages, and he claims to be the last witness to their murders. There is great detail about each of the daughters, the hemophiliac son, and the personal family relationships, all told from the kitchen boy's perspective. The history is intriguing and educational. The story shows a family not so different from other families but one which was dealing with much fear and worry for their lives.

The Russian revolution has always been a fascinating part of twentieth-century history, and there is much interest in the downfall and murders of the entire royal family. From a historical perspective, even though the novel is very illuminating, at times the novel seems to belabor the family's existence and imprisonment. However, the novel is extremely popular, and anyone who reads this novel, so extensively researched by Mr. Alexander, will come away glad to have read the book. The Kitchen Boy may be an inspiration to others for even more research about this period of time in Russia.

- Lacey Echols is Instructor of Mathematics at Butler University.