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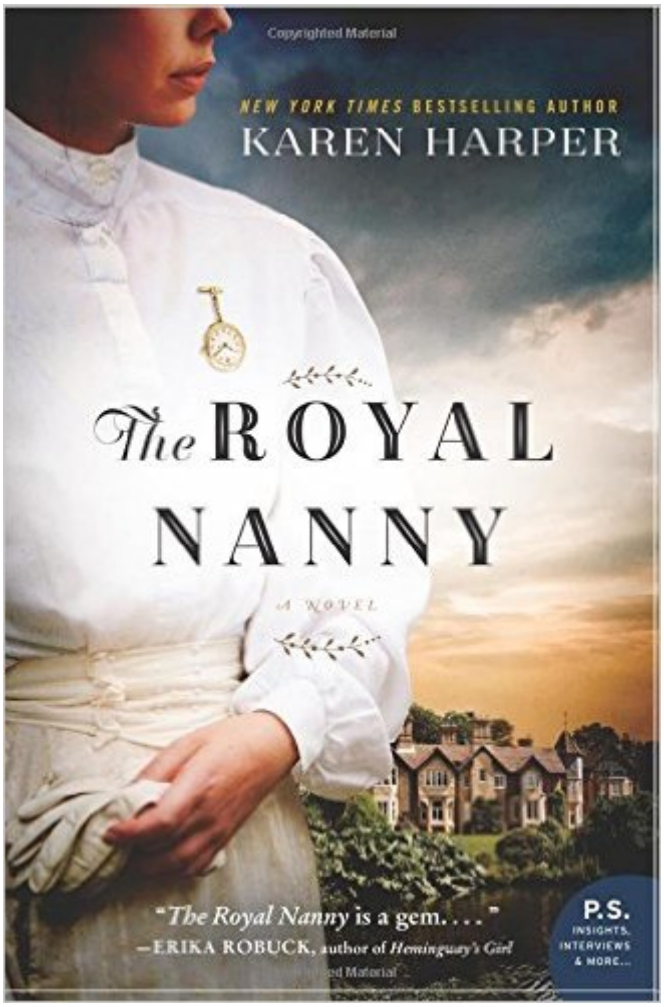
The Royal Nanny: A Novel



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Synopsis

Based on a seldom-told true story, this novel is perfect for everyone who is fascinated by Britainâ ™s royal familyâ ”a behind the scenes look into the nurseries of little princes and the foibles of big princes.April, 1897: A young nanny arrives at Sandringham, ancestral estate of the Duke and Duchess of York. She is excited, exhaustedâ ”and about to meet royalty. . . .So begins the unforgettable story of Charlotte Bill, who would care for a generation of royals as their parents never could. Neither Charlotteâ ”LaLa, as her charges dub herâ ”nor anyone else can predict that eldest sons David and Bertie will each one day be king. LaLa knows only that these children, and the four who swiftly follow, need her steadfast loyalty and unconditional affection.But the greatest impact on Charlotteâ ™s life is made by a mere bud on the family tree: a misunderstood soul who will one day be known as the Lost Prince. Young Prince John needs all of Lalaâ ™s loveâ ”the kind of love his parents wonâ ™tâ |or canâ ™tâ |show him.From Britainâ ™s old wealth to the glittering excesses of Tsarist Russia; from country cottages to royal yachts, and from nursery to ballroom, Charlotte Bill witnesses history. The Royal Nanny is a seamless blend of fact and fictionâ ”an intensely intimate, yet epic tale spanning decades, continents, and divides that only love can cross.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Did you know that Queen Victoria’s beloved Pomeranian dogs hid under her long skirts? Or that Victoria always blamed the early death of her loved husband Albert on her son Bertie who had a love affair which his father was trying to cover up? Or that when Bertie was King he used to put pats of butter on his pants to melt down his legs in a race to amuse his grandchildren? This is just some

of the delightful royal trivia which leaks out of this novel from the perspective of a royal nanny, Charlotte Bill, who came to live at York Cottage at Sandringham. The story begins in 1897 when Charlotte first came to care for Duke George's and Duchess Mary's children - two of whom would become Kings of England: David and his brother Bertie, Queen Elizabeth's father.Albert, Victoria's husband, bought Sandringham and 700 acres surrounding it for his heirs. It is a calendar house with 365 rooms. In 1897, Charlotte was to care for David who was four, and Bertie a mere 1 1/2 and a new royal baby. More royal children would follow totalling 6 in all. The Duke was Queen Victoria's grandson, who would eventually become King with his wife Mary as Queen.Through this novel, you will live through a lot of royal history seen through Nanny Charlotte's eyes: Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, Victoria's death in 1901, Kind Edward's ascent to the throne, visits of the Kaiser and Tsar Nicholas with his doomed family, a meeting with Teddy Roosevelt and Winston Churchill through WWI when David is getting seduced in Paris by a married French woman.I found myself googling places which Nanny Charlotte mentioned such as Richmond Park, Kensington Palace, Osborne House at the Isle of Wight, and Marlborough House. Charlotte is a lovely and sympathetic narrator whose company readers will enjoy. She helps you understand how David never left his adolescence, and was rather self-centered and dominated by strong women. Or how Bertie may have developed his stammer because of being mistreated - starved and locked in cabinets by a mean nurse - and forced to wear iron leg splints by his unaffectionate and overbearing father.Then there was Johnnie, the royal sibling with epilepsy, whom his family kept hidden and who Nanny Charlotte adored. This is a fascinating tale and a fun, light read. Readers who enjoy novels about British Kings and Queens and their offspring, and the history which surrounds them, will find this enticing. I did. You won't wish you grew up Royal during that time period. The author captures the spirit of the family and times in which they lived. I majored in history, and teach British design history. This novel is a delightful way to learn a little history and gain insight on the Royal Family, past and present

I realize many others enjoyed and appreciated this book, so I realize I may be in the minority here, but I found it deadly dull. As someone who appreciates great examples of both nonfiction and historical fiction, and as a rabid appreciator of anything Edwardian, I expected and wanted to like this book, but was so bored I was quickly ready to move on to something else.The goody two shoes-ish nature of Charlotte was tedious, and I found the writing and situations formulaic. Just not for me, even among characters I know and appreciate from history. So I have to disagree that all Anglophiles will love this ...this one, for one, didn't!

While the story has some fun details that are superficially rooted in historical fact (the remaining details being imagined, well within the author's rights), I had to force myself to finish the book because of the appalling Mary Sueness of the title character (please Google Mary Sue fiction if you are unfamiliar with the term). Everyone loves her, she's brilliant at everything, she's present at - and plays pivotal roles in - every conceivable historical event. It just became so absurd that it took me out of what could have been an interesting take on historical fiction.

This is a must read book. Have plenty of tissues with you. This is a true story. It's a story about Queen Elizabeth 11's father and his siblings Nanny. Charlotte Bell became the children's Nanny when David was four years old and Bertie was two. Their sister Mary was soon to be born. Charlotte would be the family's Nanny until the last child, Johnny, died in 1919. Johnny was a special child. Because of him being different his father wanted to send him away. Charlotte kept this from happening. He became her child to rear. It interesting how the Royal Families have to have perfect children and no defects otherwise the imperfect child is sent away and never to be seen or heard from again .

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