



A Rose for Sergei

K. Kidd

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“Do we really know what we are getting ourselves into...”

Sergei Kourdakov jumped from a Russian trawler in 1971 and barely survived the treacherous swim to the rocky shores of Queen Charlotte Islands, Canada. The handsome, twenty-year-old ex-KGB naval intelligence officer had defected—leaving behind a horrific life he could no longer face.

K. Kidd’s search for independence and a career with the Federal Government led her on a journey that far surpassed any expectations. A year after Sergei defected; she was introduced to him at her office in Washington, DC. The moment they met, the immediate attraction surprised them both. “Even you could be spy,” Sergei whispered.

This improbable, unbelievable, true story chronicles K. Kidd’s real-life relationship with a man who gave up everything for freedom. In her eye-opening memoir, the author reveals a side of Sergei Kourdakov that few people ever saw.

“Your story is amazing.”

—Anna Whiston-Donaldson, New York Times best-selling author of *Rare Bird: A Memoir of Loss and Love*

“Gripping read, gripping Memoir.”

“Fascinating true-life Cold War Romance.”

“This is a must read if you've read the book, The Persecutor.”

**Note: This book has been cleared for open publication by the Department of Defense’s Office of Prepublication and Security Review (DoD/OPSR).

A Rose for Sergei Details

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From Reader Review A Rose for Sergei for online ebook

Ann Andrews says

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

While nonfiction has never been my preferred reading choice, I was pleasantly surprised at A Rose for Sergei. The story is told in a well organized and easy going tone that made it impossible to put down. It's a very well written tale that is also a bit of a tear-jerker. It has definitely got me intrigued to read a little more about Sergei and learn about his life.

J. Kahele says

This was a sweet read. I'm sorry for the short review but it's been one of those exhausting weeks! Will do full review soon.

Dane Cramer says

A Touching Read

This is a must read if you've read the book, "The Persecutor." I had finished that book and had been intrigued by the life of Sergei Kourdakov. I went on line and found this book, written by KA Kidd, who had a brief relationship with him before his untimely death. I've never read a "love story" before, and was quite taken with this one. Honest, fresh, and sad.

Terri Gostola says

I would like to thank the author for sharing this very moving and heartfelt account of her relationship with Sergei Kourdakov. It couldn't have been easy to relate this painful story. I graduated from high school in 1972 and I vaguely remember hearing about this Russian defector in the news. My heart goes out to this young man who never really had a chance. My heart also goes out to the author who experienced heartbreak. The book is well written, told through the eyes of a young woman who was inexperienced with men. It's a very interesting story and the author relates much happiness before the tragedy. For me, it was fun to walk down memory lane of the early seventies. I'll be thinking about this book for quite some time. It is a five star book in every way.

Nik Krasno says

The story has a very good premise - an American girl and a Russian bear, no - man the size and strength of the bear, with different, even opposite, mentality, background and experience, fall in love. The Cold War period and the fact that the girl worked for the US intelligence, while the lad is ex-KGB make it even spicier and add the flavor of a spy thriller.

Yet it's a unique true love story: pure, touching and beautiful. Craftily written with all first-hand emotions shared by one of the participants.

And then there is a twist.... Something unexpected and drastic. I don't want to spoil it, so you, guys, would have to read it yourself. And it's worth it, believe me.

Lynn says

A bittersweet love story...

I truly enjoyed this book. I found it to be a bittersweet love story between a young American woman and a former KGB Agent who escaped a life he didn't want and could no longer face. It's a true story of courage, sacrifice and belief in Christ who will always lead us to something better if we are willing to follow.

What I loved most is this is a true story, however, it reads like Fiction. I had to keep reminding myself, this is real...this happened. I loved how the author made you feel like you were back in the early 70's when reading it. True talent transports a reader to another world and that's how it felt.

I could feel the fear. I could feel the love. I could feel the heartbreak. A wonderful memoir.

D. Thrush says

This is a short captivating true story. K is working in an office of the Defense Intelligence Agency in the early 70s when she meets a Russian defector who was a former KGB agent. They're both 21 and have an instant attraction. Her boss encourages their friendship and asks her to help him shop for clothes. K is young and inexperienced, and Sergei has had a harrowing life and regrets the violence he inflicted on others. He openly expresses his feelings and is grateful for his freedom, yet believes he's being watched and that he'll be killed. Their time together is limited due to their separate responsibilities, but they become very close. This is their very romantic unusual love story. I wish there had been a few photos.

Sarah Brocious says

"In Russia a red rose is the symbol of a bleeding heart."

And after reading this story, my heart bled too...and, I am not ashamed to admit, I shed some tears too.

A Rose for Sergei was a touching story of faith and love...and the ability of a heart to heal. I felt like I was transported back to those moments K and Sergei shared. It was a wonderful experience. Sergei was absolutely endearing! I couldn't get over my feelings of wanting to protect him and be protected by him. He certainly was an extraordinary person! Wonderful read!

Shree says

Note : This review is up in my blog - Book And Ink

A protagonist who works for federal government falling in love with a Russian KGB defector, what can one expect? I expected a thrilling tale of love where in our Russian man fighting human killing machines or our federal government secretary being kidnapped and ultimately being rescued by her oh-so-sweet-yet-tough-spy boyfriend. Nothing of that sort happened. This is no tale of fiction where one can expect 'action' in the form of exploding bombs or mortal combat. The story is a non-fictional account of Ms.Kidd's short lived love life with the controversial KGB defector Sergei Kourdakov.

Throughout the book I had to keep reminding myself that this story is not a work of fiction but a real life account, for such was the writing. The writer, Ms. Kidd, transported me to her world back in the 70s through her compelling writing. Needless to say, the characterization was perfect. She never ventured into telling about the person that Sergei was before defecting. That is the best part of the whole book. She simply didn't give room for the readers to judge Sergei for the person that he was before defecting. Sergei and Sam are poles apart, yet they find love. The fact that Sergei was a thorough gentleman simply shocked me. It is apparent that reading too much of spy novels has corrupted my sense of realities about a spy. The episode where Sergei happily lifts Sam and makes her sit on his leg is simply hilarious. Dear men, take a tip or two from this man's sense of chivalry.

MY SAY: A humorous, profound and simple tale of love and loss.

RATING: 8/10

Cora Graham says

A beautiful love story centered around two young people from vastly different worlds in the early 70's. What sets their love story apart from all others? A few reasons.

One: Both live a life so out of the norm for most.

You have an ambitious independent young woman from D.C. who dives straight into life after high school into a world most people would be in awe over as they wonder, "Does that really happen outside of movies?". I mean, how many of you can say you know someone in or has ever been involved with the CIA or other secretive parts of the federal government, let alone worked within such organizations (I mean working at the pentagon? Wow.), and lived a normal upbringing among it all? But she doesn't stop at the first step offered to her. This young woman continues to work hard and advance up the ladder in spite of some truly scary things happening to her. She is brave and dedicated and remarkable throughout this story.

"My thoughts flashed back to security briefings from when I worked at the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). We were taught to be on the lookout for anyone trying to coerce secret information from us. These people could be friends or neighbors, someone that you would not ordinarily suspect. They had a word for people like that...spy. The thought that Sergei could be a spy did cross my mind, but I knew I had never told him I used to work for DIA. I brushed those thoughts away for now since I knew I tended to be overly suspicious sometimes. But then, I always did love mystery and intrigue."

Then you have a young man from Russia, who since a young age has seen more tragedy and more of the worlds ugliest sides than any one person should. After being orphaned so young, life turns into a mission of survival for this young man. He later joins the KGB and was put in the duty of (among other things) breaking up the secret meetings of Christians. But his life takes a drastic change when after several raids on the Christians, he becomes curious of their strong beliefs and in so curiously searching out the word of God, to thirsting for His word above all, then to accepting Jesus into his life. And so, through an act of God that gave him pause, he turns to Christ and defects from the Soviet Union to America.

"Beautiful girl like you...you could be spy!"

Two: The best part? This is a TRUE story, these are REAL people. Two people from different worlds get hurdled into each others lives through fate? Chance? Though they could not be more different, though the short journey they take together is full of mystery, danger, and secrets, it is also full of wonder, life, and love.

And all I am left with is wow. Yes, I really enjoyed this story. Yes, I recommend this book to anyone looking for a real life true love story with a bitter-sweet ending, but a moving lesson, love knows no bounds. K. A. Kidd writes her story beautifully, sucking you in to her world, telling you her story through her eyes.
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Gina says

I started this book last night, reading in bed. I read until my eyeballs were being kept open with toothpicks. I finished it today. It is an incredible, true story of Sergei Kourdakov, who defected from the Soviet Union (which in itself is an unbelievable story), and the love of his life, a woman who worked at various (including top secret) offices in the Capital. Sergei is an ex-KGB naval officer who jumped off a trawler and swam to the coast of Queen Charlotte Islands, Canada. The fact that he was successful is nothing less than a miracle. During a visit to a government office where "K" worked as a secretary, they met and it was almost love at first sight. K, known to Sam by everyone else, was nicknamed K at that first meeting when Sergei asked her why she had a boy's name. K responded it was because noone ever pronounced her real name correctly, and so she was called Sam for short. Asked how to spell it, she only got as far as "K" and he said that's what he would call her. Sergei has left a life in a country he truly loved because he could no longer do what was asked of him. His history is slowly revealed and is horrific. He simply couldn't face it any more. Extremely tall and handsome to her very petite stature, newly independent Sam finds herself undeniably attracted to this man. She has a few reservations - after all, she works with top secret documents at the Pentagon at times - and here she is dating an ex-KGB agent. Their story is remarkable. It was worth losing some sleep over.

Anna Faversham says

A five star rating in Goodreads equates to 'I was amazed'. And I was. This will be a book I read more than once and I can't say that about most books. I'll leave other reviewers to tell a little of the story, I'll just say I lived through the author's story moment by moment. Thanks to the author for sharing her true story.

Barbara says

Interesting book

I'd never heard of Sergei before but am always interested in the lives of defectors after they come here. Never anticipated defecting because of religious freedom. We take so many things for granted in this country.

K.T. McColl says

Had it been a work of fiction, A Rose for Sergei would have been a really good read. That it is memoir makes it great.

The story is told in an easy, unadorned, confident style that reels the reader in. A Rose for Sergei does a great job of invoking the 70s -- the cold war, the relative simplicity of life, the fact that a 17-year-old, fresh out of high school, could get a job with the government (with clearances, no less).

At its core, it's a love story between two vastly different individuals -- a young government secretary and an equally young Russian defector. One is innocent, just taking her first steps into adulthood, while the other, an ex-KGB agent, is considerably less so. Despite these differences, they hit it off, and what ensues is a sweet romance. Unfortunately, bitter cold war realities lurk in the shadows.

Highly recommended.

Tanya says

Life Changing

The Persecutor is a book that has stayed with me for years. I recently read it again and followed it with A Rose for Sergei. These stories will make you think and honestly might break your heart a little. But, it is so worth it. As for this book, my heart goes out to the author. Thank you so much for sharing your story, as well as bringing to light what Sergei's life was like once in America.
