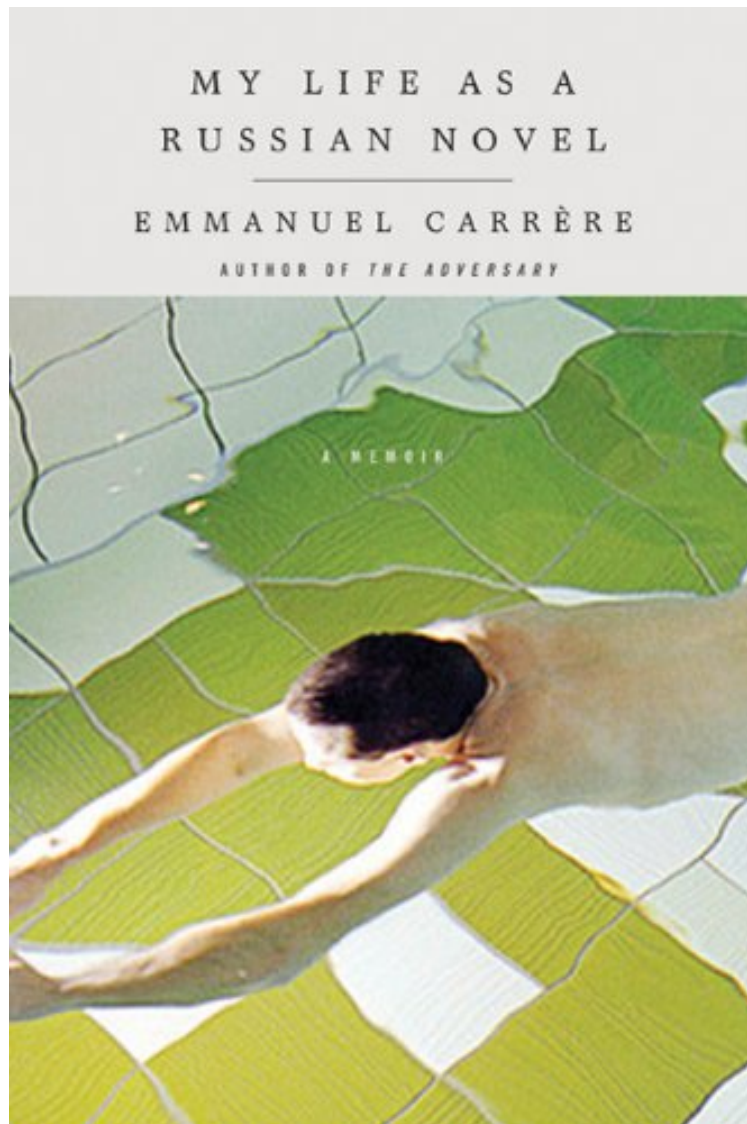


(Mobile pdf) My Life as a Russian Novel: A Memoir

## My Life as a Russian Novel: A Memoir

*Emmanuel Carrre*

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**Emmanuel Carrre : My Life as a Russian Novel: A Memoir** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised My Life as a Russian Novel: A Memoir:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Introspectively captivatingBy Daniel S.A wonderfully written series of vignettes, interlaced with passionate observations of life's emotional uncertainties and meaningless encounters. A tragic love story bewildering in its relevancy to human weakness and self destructiveness. It's neither a tragic Russian novel, nor an existential French novel, but a little of both while making the task of reading it less troublesome to digest. Well done!1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I like his fiction, but I don't like the man.By B.

W. He is so self-involved he has no consideration for either of the women in his life for whom he publicly publishes letters. He shows open disdain for the middle class, but makes no case for the privileged class being in any way better. He comes off as a hypocritical double-standardized sexist with, despite his honesty in describing how awful he is, no apparent understanding of how awful he is. The sex story he seemed so proud of was eye-rollingly juvenile. He criticizes a critic for being too inclined to look down on others, but he himself seems to look down on everyone. I liked "The Moustache" and "Class Trip," and I like the TV show "The Returned" for which he wrote several episodes, but after reading this memoir I absolutely hate him as a person. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By Customer A fascinating narrative.

An unsparingly truthful account of love, betrayal, and the traps we set for ourselves, by France's master of psychological suspense. In work after work, the critically acclaimed author Emmanuel Carrre has trained his unblinking gaze on the lives of others as they fight a losing battle with that most fearsome of adversaries: the self. Now, determined to escape the bleak visions of his narratives, he takes on a film project in the heart of Russia while also embarking on a new love affair back home in Paris. But soon enough, the diversion he seeks eludes him, intimacy proves too arduous, and Carrre is left peering into the dark mirror of his own life. Set in Paris and Kotelnich, a small post-Soviet town, *My Life as a Russian Novel* traces Carrre's pursuit of two obsessions: the disappearance of his Russian grandfather and his erotic fascination with a woman he loves but cannot keep from destroying. In prose that is elegant and passionate, Carrre weaves the strands of his story into a travelogue of a journey inward. Road trip, confession, erotic tour de force: this fearless reckoning illuminates the schemes we devise to evade ourselves and the inevitable payment they exact.

From Publishers Weekly In this compelling, intensely interior-driven narrative, French author Carrre (*The Adversary*) uses as a point of departure the return of a Hungarian mental patient imprisoned in a Russian hospital since the end of WWII to unlock the author's own guilt-ridden, transgressive past. Carrre admits he is chronically attracted to tales of madness, due largely to deeply suppressed feelings of shame surrounding the family relationship to Carrre's grandfather, a brilliant but gloomy Russian-speaking Georgian who migrated to France and gravitated toward the German occupiers during WWII out of frustration and disgruntlement. He worked as an "interpreter" for the Nazis in Bordeaux, then vanished at the time of Liberation. Denial of his grandfather's deeds had gnawed at him all his life, and by venturing to Kotelnich, Russia, with a film crew, ostensibly to produce a documentary of the plight of this long-lost Hungarian mental patient, Carrre plunged back into his mother's first language, Russian, hoping somehow to gain insight into his grandfather. Hand-in-hand in this torturous Russian saga is Carrre's romantic crisis with fiancée Sophie, a young woman in love with the author but so cowed by his moods and self-absorption that she took another lover and lied outrageously about it, compounding Carrre's emotional paranoia. Despite a puerile erotic "short story" to Sophie that appears midway, Carrre's solipsistic work proves absorbing, while his rendering of the hard-worn Russian inhabitants of Kotelnich are frankly moving. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist In this tepid memoir, acclaimed French novelist Carrere turns his critical eye on himself, recounting a disappointing documentary-film endeavor and a deteriorating romance. The discovery of a Hungarian prisoner of war brings Carrere to the tiny post-Soviet town of Kotelnich, but the dead-end story crushes his hopes for an interesting film project. Though rural Kotelnich is hopelessly dull, Carrere decides to stay. He'll cover the town's poor, hard-working residents, including a bodybuilder who helps reform wayward young men and a local girl aspiring to be the next Britney Spears. More important, he'll look into the mysterious disappearance of his Russian grandfather. In between trips, Carrere laments the precarious state of his love affair with sexy Sophie, who lives with him in Paris. She's become pregnant by another lover but aborts the child, insisting Carrere is the one she loves. Journalist and filmmaker Carrere interweaves passages of deep introspection with racy love scenes that seem inserted purely for effect. Rich, evocative prose is the main appeal here, as the memoir itself tends to wander, trying to cover too much. --Allison Block Carrre brings the whole to sharp focus with a few jarring truths and a moment of great beauty. You leave its last pages with a deep appreciation for life.