



The Amber Room: The Fate of the World's Greatest Lost Treasure

Catherine Scott-Clark, Adrian Levy

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The history of art has produced few works as ambitious and as valuable as the Amber Room. Famous throughout Europe as "the eighth wonder of the world," its vast and intricately worked amber panels were sent in 1717 by Frederick I of Prussia as a gift to Peter the Great of Russia. Erected some years later, they quickly became a symbol of Russia's imperial might.

For more than two hundred years the Amber Room remained in its Russian palace outside St. Petersburg (Leningrad), but when the Nazi army invaded Russia and swept towards Leningrad in 1941, the panels were wrenched from the walls, packed into crates, and disappeared from view, never to be seen again.

Dozens of people have tried to trace the whereabouts of the Amber Room, and several of them have died in mysterious circumstances. Adrian Levy and Catherine Scott-Clark have gone further along the trail of this great lost treasure than anyone before them, and have unraveled the jumble of evidence surrounding its fate. Their search catapulted them across eastern Europe and into the menacing world of espionage and counterespionage that still surrounds Russia and the former Soviet bloc. In archives in St. Petersburg and Berlin, amid boxes of hitherto unseen diaries, letters, and classified reports, they have uncovered for the first time an astounding conspiracy to hide the truth.

In a gripping climax that is a triumph of detection and narrative journalism, *The Amber Room* shows incontrovertibly what really happened to the most valuable lost artwork in the world, and why the truth has been withheld for so long.

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