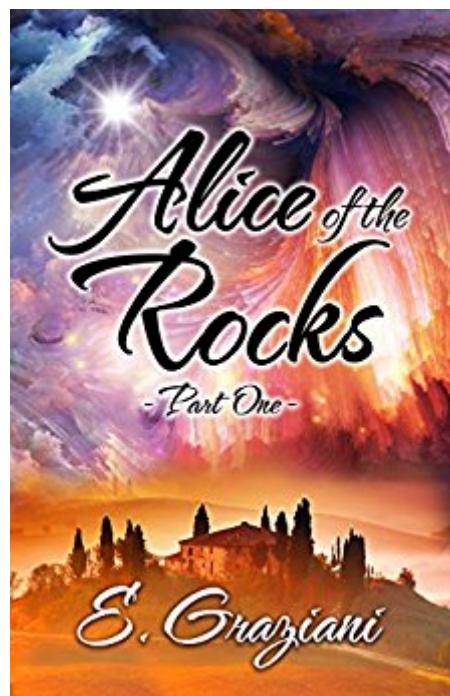


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Alice Of The Rocks: Part One



Synopsis

Promise that you will come back. Born in 1495 and raised in 2012, Alice Ferro's life has been anything but normal. The only problem is, she doesn't know it. As a 17-year-old in 2029, she has an ideal life, complete with loving parents, the latest technical gadgets, and a summer vacation in Italy. Upon arriving in Florence, sensations of surreal memories begin to surface, leaving her puzzled and confused. Knowing that reconnecting with his lost love could be dangerous for both of them, but willing to take the risk, Claudio Moro seeks out Alice in her new world. His very existence in 1512 is at stake! Having been accused of both treason and murder, he needs Alice to help clear his name and redeem his family's honour. The question is, will Alice remember their love and care enough to leave her perfect future to redirect his doomed past?

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Customer Reviews

I went into this book the way I usually do - without much of a clue what it was about. I'm the world's worst blurb reader. All I knew was, it's YA, there's time travel, and there's a character named Alice.

That was enough to get me interested. And now I'm here on the desperate quest to somehow convey just how absolutely wonderful this book is... Halfway through, I tried to force myself to slow down. It didn't work. It's the kind of book you just can't leave, you only put down if you absolutely have to, and you get angry with anyone or anything trying to keep you away from it. The world the author created - partly in 1512 Florence, partly in 2029 Italy and Canada - is so rich, so immersive, you're not reading the book, you're living it. Just to give an example of how deeply I got sucked in: I read until 2 in the morning (something the wise, adult part of me very rarely allows) and then fell asleep so entangled in the story's threads, in my dreams, I was in the book. Some authors will add a lot of detail and it just reads descriptive. Others add a lot of detail and it comes alive. E. Graziani is definitely one of the latter category. The plot was 100% predictable - in that I always knew what the end result would be - but it was nevertheless thrilling to discover just how it would come about. The author's writing style is beautiful, sometimes archaic and highly poetic, and the characters - especially Leonardo da Vinci himself - are perfectly developed and authentic human beings. I've been told it's romance, but from my point of view, it's not. Most romance I've read is cheesy bordering on or downright crossing into pointless. So this isn't romance, it's love. Love is real. Love is understood. Love is necessary. The one miniature beef I had with the story is, a person from 1512 can hardly step into 2029 and understand/be understood by the people they'll meet there without the slightest problem. That's the one point where I had to suspend disbelief, but I was very willing to do that. The rest is flawlessly executed. Kudos to the extensive research into Renaissance history that must have gone into this.

Meet Claudio and Eliza, in the 16th century Florence, whose encounter and love is highly impossible. She is a scullery maid, he is a count, who would imagine them together? Slowly paced at the beginning, the story is becoming more and more mysterious, once we are introduced to the world of the 2029 Alice and her encounter with the handsome Claudio, in Tuscany. She came from her hometown of Toronto to visit relatives and ends up caught into the layers of time and historical intrigues. Because Eliza and Alice are the same person, only a couple of centuries distance. Claudio will convince her of the outstanding destiny and his journey through centuries - using a sophisticated portal developed by the curious Leonardo da Vinci. Together, they return to Florence to render justice. Alice will not only remember her former adventures, but is definitely in love with Claudio, that she has to leave for returning, alone, in her century. I particularly appreciated, besides the love story where the words are so well chosen that you actually feel the deep feeling love of the two of them, without using too much sweetness and kitsch adornments, the interesting scientific

references to various space-time variations. The historical ambiance is accurately and carefully described, introducing the young adult reader to a world that might look very unattractive in the history books. The messages regarding women rights and discrimination is also elegantly spread. I only found a bit relatively uninteresting and not too spectacular the 2029 references, incredibly similar with our 2016 times.

Disclaimer: Book offered by the author in exchange of an honest review

This review originally appeared on my blog at www.gimmethatbook.com. ALICE OF THE ROCKS is many books at once: it's a romance novel with time travel, with some history and suspense thrown in for good measure. We are thrown into the world of Leonardo Da Vinci and the grasping and evil Medici empire, mixed with present day Italy as Alice enjoys a summer vacation. The two worlds collide when Alice becomes enamored of a hotel employee. Her strong feelings confuse her, and when she learns she is just a scullery maid, running for her life in 1512, she is forced to make a decision that will not only affect her, but many other lives—both in 2029 AND in 1512. Lots of responsibility for a teenage girl! Alice is mature for her age, even as she is thinking about where to go to college and how to tell her guy back home the relationship isn't doing anything for her. All she's trying to do is enjoy her time in Italy this summer with her parents and aunt and uncle. When she meets a boy her own age, and she starts feeling *deja vu*, she wonders what is happening. They get a bit closer, and promise to spend more time together. As she and the handsome Claudio tour Italy and see the sights, the truth becomes revealed to her slowly, and she is then given an opportunity to set things right in 1515. The character of Alice is a strong one, and I enjoyed that. She is a girl with emotions, yes, but she is also imbued with a sense of responsibility and the desire to consider others' feelings as well. She's not your typical spoiled rich girl. In fact, her sense of justice is what makes the ending of this book so heart rending. The author paints a picture of two star crossed lovers, with time running out on them (both in the past and in the present). The emotion between them is strong, yet chaste—there are no awkward scenes between them to slow the action down. Graziani's knowledge and description of Italy, then and now, is superb. I could see the countryside before me, smell the air, taste the wine. She outdoes herself with the story of Da Vinci and Claudio Moro—there is intrigue, lust, and gossip going on behind those castle walls! Claudio's relationship with his mother is delightfully familiar, and the manipulative Clarice is well written. She is my favorite *evil* ingenue. The story moves back and forth from the past to the present, and after a few chapters I found the transition to be fluid and appropriate. The story builds and builds, and then at last Alice is empowered to make things happen. Time seems to speed up, and the suspense and action

multiplies. This is the best part of the book, when things come together and then the ending is dropped on you like a ton of bricks. The author told me she is working on a sequel and I'm happy to hear that. I really need to know what the future holds for Alice!

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