

DEAR COMRADE NOVAK

a novel by

Silvia Hildebrandt

“a ferocious and beautifully written novel...”

Bibiana Krall, author of *Volga Black*

There is no such thing as a private life in the Socialist Republic of Romania. There is no such thing as a homosexual. No such thing as love. Not a single case of AIDS. Those corrupt western ideas simply don't exist.

In 1980s communist Romania, three school graduates form an unusual friendship: Attila, who's in love with his teacher; Tiberius, son of secret-police parents, and Viorica, who will be forced into a marriage arranged when she was four. In the years leading up to the tyrant Ceaușescu's downfall, can the bonds of friendship and love survive conspiracy, revolution, and a deadly secret?

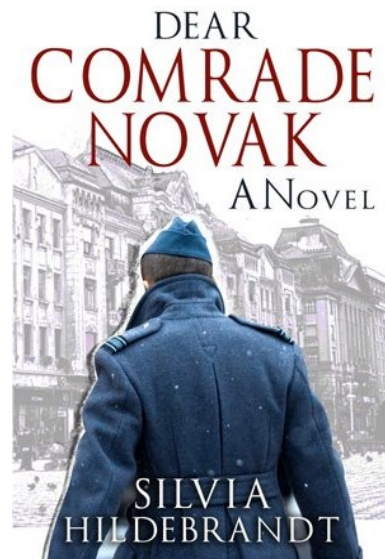
About the Author

Silvia Hildebrandt's family fled Romania for Germany in 1990, after the revolution and the civil war between Hungarians and Romanians. “For the most part, we were looked down upon as poor, illiterate gypsies. So I denied I was born and raised in Romania, in an attempt to assimilate with German culture. But my 6th grade literature teacher encouraged me to write something about Romania. ‘You have so many unique stories to tell,’ she said. But at that time, I'd buried my identity deep within me.”

After her first novel, *A Century Divided*, set in New York in the 1920s, Silvia found herself drawn to Eastern Europe as a setting for her next book. “I dug into the Romanian history and into my own. I had to remind myself that I was there; in that scene, with my characters walking around in Timișoara and in that Romanian village they call their hometown; this wasn't just their story, but my own as well.”

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