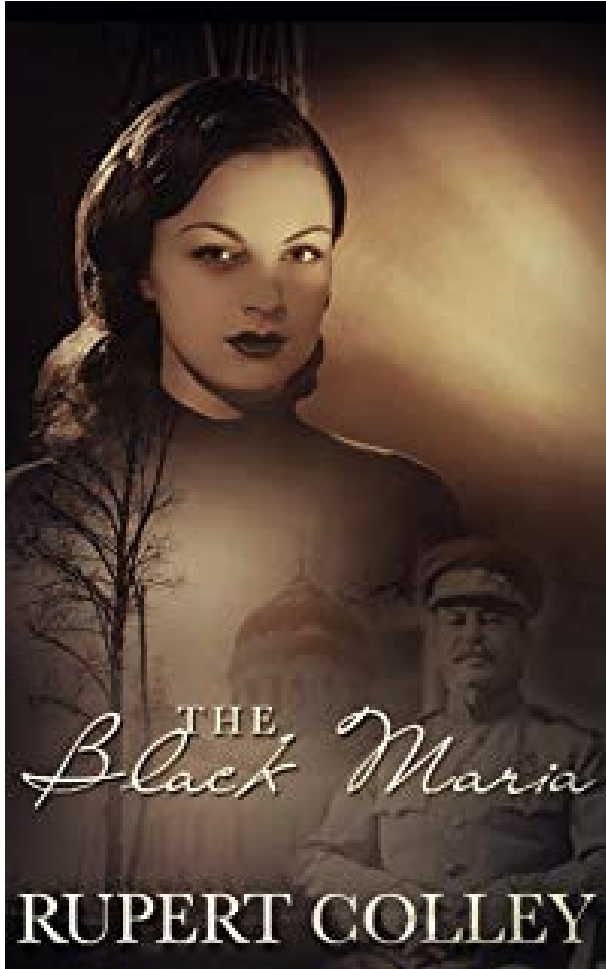


The Black Maria



Author:	Rupert Colley
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[The Black Maria.pdf](#)

[The Black Maria.epub](#)

When love becomes your greatest enemy. Moscow, 1935. Stalin is in power. People live in constant fear – fear of each other, fear of being denounced, and fear of Stalin’s secret police, the NKVD. Ordinary citizens live behind a mask – a public face that enables them to toe the Party line and conceal their true feelings and personal thoughts. One such citizen is thirty-year-old Maria. She has a past – the sort that, if known, would cost her her freedom. So monstrous her crime, she is forced to live a lie. Maria marries Petrov, a Party activist, not out of love, but as a means of forming a new identity, to escape her past. Her existence is safe – but dull.

Until the day she meets Dmitry. Dmitry is an artist, whose work allows him a standard of living above the average Muscovite. But Dmitry feels straitjacketed by what he’s allowed to paint. Instead of the state approved rural idyll of his latest commission, he aspires to paint the female form. But when Maria offers to pose for him, he refuses – until he falls in love with her. Dmitry’s artistic aspirations and Maria’s yearning for a new life force them to risk everything in the name of love and freedom. ‘The Black Maria’ is a novel about truth – the distortion of it, and the fear of it. And at the heart of the novel, is Maria’s brutal past. When love comes unexpectedly, it threatens to expose the truth and destroy her. “I’m seriously in awe. It’s a remarkable piece of work. It’s dark, gritty, and really quite disturbing. And heartbreaking at the same time.

A brilliant achievement!” Sinead Fitzgibbon. Rupert Colley is the founder, editor and writer of the highly successful ‘History In An Hour’ series of ebooks and audio, published by HarperCollins.

‘The Black Maria’ is his third novel.