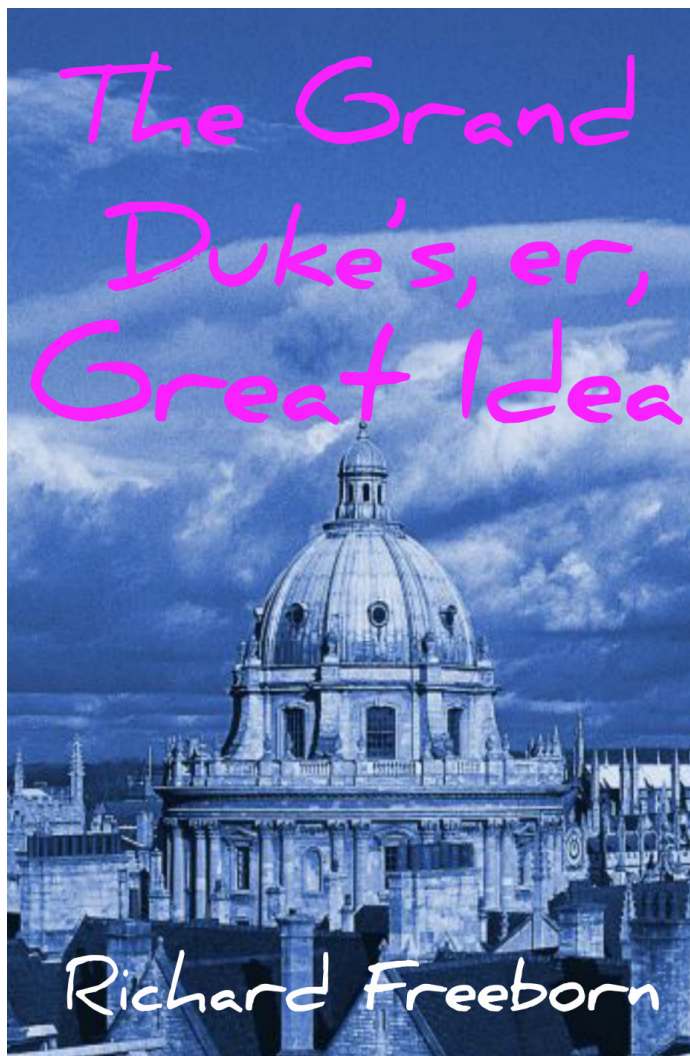


THE GRAND DUKE'S, ER, GREAT IDEA

Richard Freeborn



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Who should rule Russia? In an era of oligarchs and growing Russian wealth, the issue is not irrelevant. Equally, in the late nineteenth century, funding in university colleges was as essential as it is now.

The novel is set in St George's College, Oxford, where mismanagement and factional rivalry have led to the urgent need to raise funds. A Russian Grand Duke, Eugene Saltanovich, has promised an endowment. Long resident in England, the Anglophile Prince Rostov, a former student at the college, is invited along with his wife, Princess Alisa, to a memorial dinner where he is to interpret the Grand Duke's speech. The occasion turns out to be a fiasco when the Grand Duke claims his dancing doll will save Russia.

What follows is apparently murder and an attempted cover-up that rouses the prince's suspicions. The Grand Duke's dancing doll proves to be a fact, but the alleged presence of nuns in the college leads the prince to realize that they offer a vital clue to the Grand Duke's, er, great idea. Rostov is witness to a further death, provokes a duel, finally uncovers the ambitious plan at the heart of the cover-up and the even more startling likelihood that, had the Grand Duke's, er, great idea worked, the history of the twentieth century might have been completely different.

Ingenious, witty and original, The Grand Duke's, er, Great Idea is a quality crime novel based on historical fact, but strictly of relevance to the present day.

Also by **Richard Freeborn:**

Academic Studies Turgenev, A Study. A Short History of Modern Russia. The Rise of the Russian Novel. The Russian Revolutionary Novel. Dostoevsky. Furious Vissarion: Belinskii's Struggle for Literature, Love and Ideas
Translations: Ivan Turgenev, Sketches from a Hunter's Album. Ivan Turgenev, Home of the Gentry. Ivan Turgenev, Rudin. Ivan Turgenev, A Month in the Country. Ivan Turgenev, Fathers and Sons. F.M Dostoevsky, An Accidental Family.
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