

The Titanic Test: A Love Story

Ann K. Simpson

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Time travelers wrestle with interfering in history in the thoughtful romance novel The Titanic Test.

In Ann K. Simpson's romance novel *The Titanic Test*, a time-traveling teenager attempts to change the course of history.

Charlie is a junior at a high school for time travelers. She dreads her junior year test, an exam that sends each student back to a point in history with a mystery assignment. Each junior is paired with a senior who keeps an eye on them during the test, ensuring that they stay safe and break no rules.

Charlie is sent back to 1912 to be a passenger on the *Titanic*, tasked with retrieving a valuable edition of a book of poetry before it is lost at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. She is warned against interfering with the sinking of the boat. As Charlie grapples with the task at hand, she learns that the senior assigned to watch over her is her childhood friend, Quinn, with whom she enjoys chemistry-laden banter.

As Charlie and Quinn befriend other passengers aboard the *Titanic*, they find their charge not to intervene with history challenging. The people they meet are vibrant, each with their own dreams and preoccupations. Charlie rooms with a woman returning to the US after studying medicine in England; she saves another woman from jumping overboard to avoid an arranged marriage. In the course of these interactions, Charlie begins to appreciate time travel, as it allows her to learn the stories of individuals living through big historical events. Charlie is happy to disobey the rules of her teachers and try to save these people, but Quinn is concerned about both of them failing their tests, resulting in an ongoing moral struggle between doing what they are told versus doing what they believe is right.

In addition to the ethical complications of time travel, the novel wrestles with romantic complications: Quinn shows interest in Charlie, who is skeptical. Charlie assumes that Quinn's flirtation has been part of his ploy to keep her in line during her test so that he can graduate. Both have reasons to trust and to mistrust each other, resulting in precarious balance. These concerns play out in several arguments between the two as their relationship becomes intertwined with their test. The test asks them to keep an emotional barrier between themselves and the historical figures they meet. Charlie cannot maintain this barrier with her friends on the *Titanic*, but she keeps her feelings for Quinn at arm's length. Quinn does the opposite, trying to get close to Charlie without focusing on those around them. It isn't until the two understand each other's perspective that they open themselves to their connection and start working together.

Tension builds as the boat approaches the iceberg, with Charlie and Quinn fighting against the inevitable in every way they can. After an action-packed climax, the novel concludes with an important lesson for the time travelers.

The Titanic Test is a captivating romance novel in which a teenager travels back in time and learns the impact she can have on history.

JULIA DILLMAN (November 19, 2024)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to

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