



Cleopatra VII: Daughter of the Nile, Egypt, 57 B.C. (The Royal Diaries)

By Kristiana Gregory

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Established Dear America author Kristiana Gregory kicks off the Royal Diaries with the captivating story of young Cleopatra's tumultuous life. Daughter of King Ptolemy Autletes, Pharaoh of Egypt, Cleopatra lives a life filled with opulence and mystery.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The year is 57 B.C., and 12-year-old Cleopatra, Princess of the Nile, has a lot on her mind. Her father, the Pharaoh of Egypt, nearly died when a venomous adder meant for him attacked and killed his favorite servant. Now the Pharaoh has gone into hiding, hunted by his enemies, and the young princess has to keep her head--literally--as her power-hungry older sister Tryphaena threatens to grab her father's throne.

"I took the cup and raised it toward Tryphaena as if toasting her, but really I was watching the liquid, looking for oil floating on its surface, or powder sticking to the sides of the cup. If I suspected poison and tossed it into the pool, she would have her guards behead me on the spot. If it was indeed poison, one sip and I could die..."

In an elegantly written royal diary, Cleopatra VII has recorded every rich detail from this tumultuous time: her hairsbreadth escape by boat to Rome, where she and her father must plead for help; her struggle to absorb the overwhelming sights (and smells) of this new city and its "barbarian" ways; and her poise and quick thinking as she deals with the likes of General Pompey, Marc Antony, and the famous orator Cicero ("words fly from him like darts!").

Kristiana Gregory, a contributor to the excellent Dear America series, has done an admirable job ghostwriting for the princess, painting an engaging portrait of a resourceful, intelligent, compassionate young woman forged by the forces of her time. The book concludes with a helpful section of maps, portraits, a Pharaonic family tree, and 20 pages of illustrations. (Ages 8 to 12) --*Paul Hughes*

From School Library Journal

Grade 4-8-Princess Cleopatra narrates major episodes from her life in a diary she keeps from age 12 to 14. She is sympathetically depicted as a delightful mixture of adolescent uncertainty and as a young woman with great maturity and insight. Born into a royal household full of intrigue and fears of assassination, she desperately wants to survive to become a responsible and just queen. She describes everyday life in the Egyptian court and her frantic flight to Rome with her father, Ptolemy XII, to seek refuge and alliance with the Romans against their enemies and her sisters, who both seek the throne. Characters are well drawn, Cleopatra's relationships with others are realistically portrayed, and historical background is well integrated into the text. This is an enjoyable story, followed by a synopsis of the queen's later years, a time line, family tree, and black-and-white reproductions of old engravings and paintings.

Cynthia M. Sturgis, Ledding Library, Milwaukee, OR

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From Booklist

In a new entry in the Royal Diaries series, Cleopatra, age 12, writes in her diary about the events of her daily life, which are far from mundane. She discusses the attempts on her father's life, her pet leopard, her trip to see the lighthouse at Pharos (one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World), and her exile when her elder sister usurps the throne. Her exotic life also includes some horrifying events (her sister's head is brought in on a platter), and Gregory has clearly done her research, inserting many interesting bits of historical lore. Of course, the story is never truly believable--unless you can imagine young Cleopatra writing such lines on her papyrus as "I, Cleopatra, Princess of the Nile." But Gregory writes evocatively, and she provides a good deal

of helpful background information at the end of the book. *Susan Dove Lempke*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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