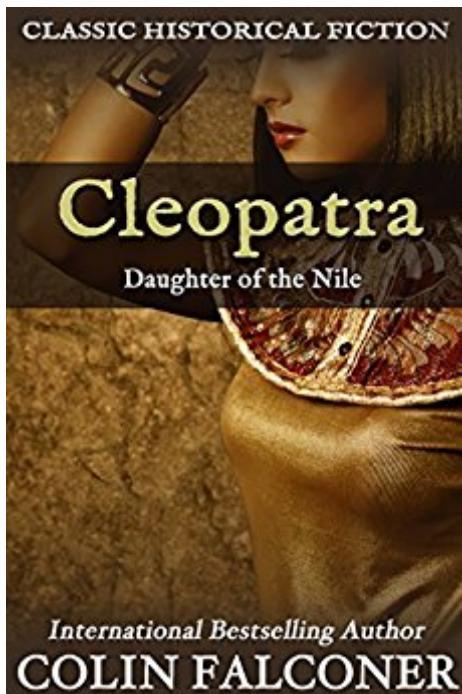


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Cleopatra Daughter Of The Nile (Classic Historical Fiction)



Synopsis

Cleopatra VII of Egypt was barely more than a girl when she inherited the richest empire in the world - one that stretched from the scorching deserts of lower Egypt to the shining Mediterranean metropolis of Alexandria with its famed library and lighthouse. Imperilled at every turn by court conspiracies and Roman treachery, the young Queen was forced to flee Alexandria and live in exile while a foreign army overran her city and her own family plotted her downfall. With nothing to lose, Cleopatra sought a partnership with the only man who could secure Egypt's safety: Julius Caesar, a wily politician and battle-hardened general with a weakness for women. The result was a passionate love affair that scandalized Rome and thrust Cleopatra into a world of deadly intrigue played for the very highest stakes - a world she would continue to mesmerize and manipulate even after Caesar was gone. At the height of her power and fame, Cleopatra fell in love with Caesar's successor, Marc Antony, a general known as much for his drunken hedonism as his victories in battle. Brash, irresistible and fatally unreliable Antony's once-strong hold on the Roman empire soon slips away, and with it Cleopatra's fortunes. When the tide finally turns against Cleopatra and Anthony her she plots a last, spectacular manoeuvre to save her children, her empire, and her place among the gods. There is no woman in history that excites the curiosity or the imagination like Cleopatra. A life as poignant as it was inspired, this daughter of the Nile simply had no equal in a world ruled by men. As the last queen of Egypt, she remains one of the most enigmatic figures in historical fiction. Her enemies told so many lies to bring her down; how many do we still believe? Who was Cleopatra Daughter of the Nile? This is the riveting story of Egypt's last and greatest queen, a look at Cleopatra, the great woman behind the legend. In this new and revised edition - the director's cut - takes the reader inside the walls of Alexandria's great palaces, creating a vivid portrait of an unforgettable woman who thrived and triumphed in a world ruled by men. Falconer's Cleopatra is vulnerable, intelligent and liberated, defined by her wit as much as her beauty; - Publishers Weekly

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Customer Reviews

I agree--this book is a page-turner. It did, as many historical novels should do, encourage me to brush up my history and so I returned to Suetonius (what a lively gossip) and Tacitus and Plutarch (don't be put off by the names, they too write entertaining history) -- and I found that there were some parts of the Antony/Cleopatra story which I felt were opportunities lost. On the other hand, I enjoyed the imaginative sections--eg Cleopatra's voyeuristic introduction to sex. All in all a great read, terrific descriptions (the library at Alexander is superb) but a trifle too dramatic for the purist. But for leisure reading--highly recommended. One final thing--I think the Australian (Random House) version has a better cover...Don't underestimate the attraction of the cover...

Having read a multitude of books on Cleopatra (some fictional and others factual) this book left me with mixed emotions. While it was refreshing to read yet another perspective on this fascinating woman's character, I was ultimately disappointed. Falconer clearly depicts her political acuity and that aspect I found far more realistic than the self-serving seductress Rome portrayed her as, but his book did not show her as the multi-faceted woman she truly was. Nowhere did I find the wit, the charm or the graciousness this woman would have possessed. Her romances (if you could call them that) with Caesar and Anthony were without depth or passion. While I do not require sexually graphic writing to hold my interest, there was little to elude to the level of intimacy she must have enjoyed with these men. Cleopatra's and Caesarion's relationship was stilted, and treated almost as an after thought. The ending was abrupt, cold and unbelievable. Can anyone really believe that after all of his years of service and loyalty, Cleopatra's most trusted advisor would turn traitor simply

because the winds of fortune had shifted? Hard to believe a woman so perceptive would have confided in such a person. The few things I did like about this book were the characters of Apollodorus, the scenery depictions, and the different spin on Octavian after he had control of Egypt. Most books depict him as wanting Cleopatra preserved at all costs for his Triumph in Rome, but here he actually wanted her to commit suicide. It was an interesting twist, and quite possibly, the most interesting part of the entire book. I recommend reading *The Alexandrian* by Martha Rolfhart, or even *That Egyptian Woman* by Noel Gerson, both of which give interesting theories on this marvelous woman.

I like historical fiction, and the stories that authors weave around historical figures make the history come to life. But, I'm just not getting it with this book. I'm only 100 pages into the book, and I'm trying to decide whether or not to just move on, simply because I don't like the writing, the characters or the author's view of the characters. I'm fairly well versed in ancient (specifically Roman) history, so the story and the history are good, but these characters Falconer has created are one dimensional. For instance, Caesar is just boring and Cleopatra is neurotic AND boring. I have lost count with how many times the author refers to people as slabs of fat and barrels of pork. And Caesar's "black, piercing eyes" turn miraculously blue about page 90 or so. I'm curious as to why the author would refer to Cleopatra's "Egyptian nose", since she wasn't Egyptian, or her "tight, little Asian body" (that was just offensive) since she wasn't Asian. Asian refers to ethnic groups and countries specific to the continent of ASIA. Yes, Egypt and the near east were considered Oriental by Roman standards, but that is a term that is not interchangeable with Asia. Phew! I talked myself into it, I'm chucking this book. I hope his other novels are better written than this, or that he at least picked up a decent editor along the way.

This novel has been overlooked, and that's too bad. Colin Falconer recreated ancient Egypt and Rome with a vibrancy that cannot be attained in a biography. Most of what we know about Cleopatra was written by her enemies, and so has to be read with skepticism. Falconer fanaticizes about her as a woman. This tale treats her with a respect lacking in the "histories" and most other historic novels about Cleopatra. What a remarkable woman. So young, with so many enemies and no one to trust! I am somewhat startled by the Book Description ...but then I realized that most of it was taken from the back of the book. So much of this hype does not represent the wonderful novel inside the covers. Cleopatra did not inherit the richest empire in the world; she inherited a contested claim to share the throne of Egypt with her younger brother Ptolemy. Her father was

deeply in debt to Rome for his throne. Cleopatra did not *brazenly* seek a partnership with the only man who could secure Egypt's safety. She was smuggled into Alexandria to meet Julius Caesar in the hope of staying alive and on the throne, and maintaining some semblance of an independent Egypt. This is a wonderful historical novel that combines the best of historic fact with the imagination needed to reconstruct ancient characters. I highly recommend *When We Were Gods*.

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