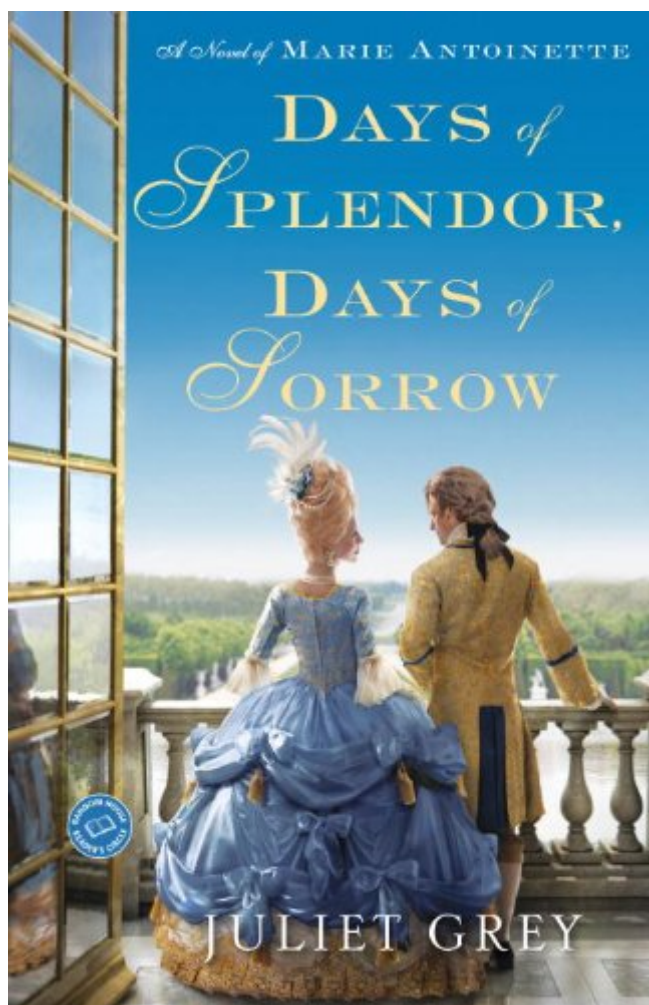


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Days Of Splendor, Days Of Sorrow: A Novel Of Marie Antoinette



Synopsis

A captivating novel of rich spectacle and royal scandal, *Days of Splendor, Days of Sorrow* spans fifteen years in the fateful reign of Marie Antoinette, France's most legendary and notorious queen. Paris, 1774. At the tender age of eighteen, Marie Antoinette ascends to the French throne alongside her husband, Louis XVI. But behind the extravagance of the young queen's elaborate silk gowns and dizzyingly high coiffures, she harbors deeper fears for her future and that of the Bourbon dynasty. From the early growing pains of marriage to the joy of conceiving a child, from her passion for Swedish military attaché Axel von Fersen to the devastating Affair of the Diamond Necklace, Marie Antoinette tries to rise above the gossip and rivalries that encircle her. But as revolution blossoms in America, a much larger threat looms beyond the gilded gates of Versailles—one that could sweep away the French monarchy forever.

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Customer Reviews

I am so in love with Juliet Grey's trilogy of Marie Antoinette. She has thoroughly researched all important sources and her novels, while fiction, are right on the mark historically. As a amateur

historian of Marie Antoinette, I highly recommend these books. It's a wonderful way to learn history (and believe me, the court of Versailles is fascinating in detail) while enjoying a good novel and getting to know the real Marie Antoinette and her entourage.

Marie comes off as completely spoiled and narcissistic which, although I've seen that characteristic done before, left me feeling no sympathy for her and I was rooting for her head myself. It seemed very much like reading from the perspective of the spoiled heiress except nothing redeemable ever happens. If you're a fan of this period then maybe you get over the character flaws, but if not, just pass.

This is the second book in Juliet Grey's trilogy of Marie Antoinette. In this novel, Marie Antoinette has at last become Queen of France. She decides to live a lavish lifestyle of gambling, dancing, and hosting parties, donning elaborate dresses and having extravagant and sometimes silly hairstyles. However in the midst of the glitz and glamour of being queen, she arouses disapproval and hatred of her French subjects. In the beginning of the novel, the Parisian crowd greatly welcomes King Louis XVI's reign with open arms. The king is young and kind-hearted and he has a beautiful, charming, young wife at his side. He seems to have a promising reign unlike his predecessor, Louis XV, whose reign caused hatred among his subjects. However, the king lacks one thing that would help secure France's promising future-- an heir. When year after year goes by without an heir, they start to place their blame on the queen. They blame her for having an extravagant lifestyle for she is dancing and acting when she should be focusing on having a heir. This starts to damage her reputation and causes her to be hated and constantly mocked and criticized by her subjects. Marie Antoinette's high-rolling lifestyle is the result of her unhappiness to not get a dauphin. She is pressured by both her mother and her brother to get an heir, and she feels like she has failed her mother, her brother, and her subjects. She decides to spend excessively to help ease her stress and disappointment. However, when she does get an heir many years later, her reputation has already been tarnished and once she becomes the scapegoat in the infamous Affair of the Diamond Necklace, she has already lost the love of her subjects, and there is nothing she could do to help recover her subjects' love. Overall, this novel is about friendship, loyalty, love, betrayal, and scandal. This novel shows an in-depth psyche of Marie Antoinette and the motives to her actions. Marie Antoinette is a complex woman, who is human and makes mistakes. She can sometimes be rash when she is emotional. This is a sympathetic novel to Marie Antoinette and is a good sequel to *Becoming Marie Antoinette*.

I will recommend this book to fans of historical fiction and anyone interested in Marie Antoinette.

This second book of Juliet Grey's Marie Antoinette trilogy exceeded- by far, all my expectations. In the author's first book, *Becoming Marie Antoinette*, we read about Antonia and how she, at a very young age becomes Queen of France- a most delightful read from beginning to end- So much so that I named it my favourite read of 2011. So how was *Days of Splendor, Days of Sorrow*, going to compare, or better yet; give me more to get excited about? Detailed to perfection at what is now customary Juliet Grey style, *Days of Splendor, Days of Sorrow*, does not disappoint. Marie Antoinette blossoms into her own woman going through many peeling and riveting stages. Her life is initially filled with the border-line obsession of finally consummating her marriage for the ultimate goal of bearing an heir to the French throne. Infinitely troubled by this freakish circumstance for several unbearable years, (ultimately due to the couple's ingenuousness and failure to seek proper medical intervention), Marie Antoinette desperately needed a diversion. Young and carefree, but nonetheless suffocating behind those palace walls, Marie Antoinette chose to keep a close-knit entourage to help alleviate her sadness. She enjoyed her late card games, her fashion, her theatre and her beloved Petit Trianon, where she could be herself. Her every move at court though, was hence discriminated. Finally, through motherhood and an heir to the throne -Marie Antoinette thought she had finally achieved happiness and won the love of her people...hmmm. Louis and Marie Antoinette shared a unique bond, but apparently another highly regarded male friend, Axel von Fersen, also held a special place in Marie Antoinette's heart...*Days of Splendor, Days of Sorrow* is Marie Antoinettes' rise to womanhood through splendor, carefree times, love, friendship, motherhood but along with that followed: worries, hurt, tragedies, defamation, betrayals, remorse, and as well, a rise to maturity. I think what I love most about this novel is precisely the way Marie Antoinette is portrayed. Juliet Grey does not create an untouchable, pure Marie Antoinette- nor does she follow those who have much maligned her in history. In this novel, Marie Antoinette encompasses the roles of queen, wife, mother, lover and friend in their purest form; told as is, without pretension. My favourite part of the book was definitely the necklace affair. So much has been written on this topic already, yet in this novel it is told in even greater depth- almost like a minute by minute retelling of the facts- the story flowing with flawless elements and way more information than I have ever read before. Incredibly interesting! Every little detail in this book is delectable, and I savoured it thoroughly. Written in good taste, nothing is amiss, and everything is possible. A work of fiction, yet written with such precise historical details, *Days of Splendor, Days of Sorrow* is much more than just another Marie Antoinette story! I can't wait for the next and final book

of this amazing trilogy. Excellent!

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