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Duchessina: A Novel Of Catherine De' Medici (Young Royals)



Synopsis

Young Catherine de' Medici is the sole heiress to the entire fortune of the wealthy Medici family. But her life is far from luxurious. After a childhood spent locked away behind the walls of a convent, she joins the household of the pope, where at last she can be united with her true love. But, all too soon, that love is replaced with an engagement to a boy who is cold and aloof. It soon becomes clear that Catherine will need all the cunning she can muster to command the respect she deserves as one of France's most powerful queens. Includes a family tree.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Catherine de'Medici, Duchessina, grows up in a palace in Florence where her family rules the city. When her family falls out of power, she must flee. She becomes imprisoned within the walls of convents for her protection against the angry mob that calls for her death. At the first convent, the nuns make their hatred of her family no secret. The Duchessina lives in misery, enduring the pain as best she can under the circumstances. Finally, the tides change and her family once again controls not only Florence but the papacy as well. The Pope, her old guardian, calls for her to live in Rome until he can make arrangements for her future. As one of the richest woman in Europe, the Pope intends to make an advantageous marriage. He marries the Duchessina off to the Dauphin of France. The Dauphin cares little for his new wife and Catherine's misery continues, but she creates advantages to help ease her pain and eventually finds contentment. A wonderful outlook on the creation of Madame Serpent, remembered in history as the "girl who endured." Carolyn Meyer takes

another historical princess and adds strong characters and rich details to spin a delightful tale. Reviewed by: Jennifer Rummel

Orphaned at a young age and heir to a vast fortune, Catherine de' Medici was one of the wealthiest young women in 16th century Europe. But that did not make her childhood happy. For her own protection, she was kept locked in her home or secluded in a convent for most of her early years. After three years at the convent, she is finally set free, only to learn she is to be married to Henri II, prince of France, in a political union. Married at the young age of fourteen, Catherine's marriage is not happy. Her husband is not interested in her, preferring his much older mistress. Catherine knows that in order to secure her future, she must produce a male heir. In order to survive in the world she must live in, she determines that she will use her skill and cunning to outwit, out scheme, and outlast her enemies, shaping her future as one of the most powerful and feared Queens in history. Although Catherine de' Medici is not the most likeable of historical figures - she was known as a cruel and manipulative queen who ruthlessly eliminated her enemies - author Carolyn Meyer manages to make her a sympathetic young woman in this novel, telling of the events that helped shape her later character. I highly recommend this novel to teen readers who love historical fiction. It is a very fascinating look at a famous queen who is not often written about in young adult fiction.

Duchessina was the first book I'd read by Carolyn Meyer. I had read many of Ann Rinaldi's books, but hadn't found an author that wrote such interesting historical fiction as her. There really isn't much out there for young adults/ teens in that genre. However, when I found the Young Royals series in the library, I was ecstatic! I was very pleased with this book. The pacing was pretty well done, albeit slower than Ms. Meyer's other books, until the end. The last few chapters were very VERY rushed. After the lovely description and detail of before, it wasn't enjoyable. I felt as if I was skimming, even though I wasn't. This is the primary reason I took a star off. As for the rest of the book, the detail was enough, but not too much that the story started to become boring. I found this book highly informational for someone new to the subject. Some topics I knew very little about that I got a good amount of information on from this book were the life of Catherine (Caterina) de' Medici, the way Italy was governed in the 1500's, a little about Catholicism in the 1500's, the renaissance, and more. I would recommend this book to fans of Ann Rinaldi, Susan Dunlap, and Carolyn Meyer's other books.

This book really moved me into feeling completely sympathetic to her situation. This book is very

well written and is great for anyone from 13 years old to 53 years old. There are rarely any books that cross age barriers like this one does. PS. When I went to France this past summer I actually visited the castle that is mentioned at the end of the book, Chenonceaux.

A good overview of Catherine's young life. It might have been better to omit anything about her later years, because the end of the book is a very rushed retelling of the last 50 or so years of her life. I'd never read much about her before, although I learned about her a bit in school, and I would be interested in reading more about her and her family. I would recommend this to people who enjoy historical fiction.

When I was finished with this book, I hated it. I thought that the author made Catherine seem like a heroine, when in reality (from what I have read) she was more of a "bad girl"! But after reviewing the book in my head after a few days, I realized how much I liked the book. It's a very fast read-things certainly don't turn out the way you would hope. So if you are a hopeless romantic reader...don't read it. But I learned a lot about that era in time. I liked it.

This was an amazing story! You feel the angst and desperation of Catherine and desperately want her to triumph. I was saddened when the book was finished and wanted it to keep going. We visited her castle in France, and because of this book, felt as if we were connected to her somehow as we were in her chambers. The author did an amazing job!!

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