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Eleanor: Crown Jewel Of Aquitaine, France, 1136 (The Royal Diaries)



Synopsis

Author of the best-selling Royal Diaries title, CLEOPATRA VII, Kristiana Gregory now takes readers to twelfth-century France and introduces Eleanor of Aquitaine, who becomes queen at age 15. Fourteen-year-old Eleanor of Aquitaine lives in a castle in Poitiers, France, with her father Count William of Aquitaine (son of William the Conqueror), and her 12-year-old sister Petronilla. Their mother died several years earlier, so their grandmother and ladies-in-waiting raise the girls. Eleanor is extremely intelligent and literate, having been carefully educated by royal tutors. Spinning bores her, as does weaving, sewing, and other housewifery skills expected of her. She would rather be a knight and ride off to war. In fact, in 1136, when her father is invited to help invade Normandy,

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (49 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

Customer Reviews

I thought this book would be boring and bought it early at a September bookfair to complete my Royal Diaries collection, but when I read it-I found it too be better than Gregory's earlier Royal Diary-Cleopatra. Not only better than Cleopatra, but better than any of the Royal Diaries! The story follows the teenage years of Eleanor, the oldest daughter of the duke of Aquitaine-a French duchy. As a teenage girl-Eleanor lives a life in her father's many castles-particularly Poitiers and Talmont-by-the-Sea under the education of her Grandmere (Grandmother) along with her dearest sister, Petronilla. Over the years we see the beautiful and artistic court of Aquitaine-which is very

genuine considering the courts of other countries are artless and dank places. Anyway, we hear stories of Eleanor's past-filled with tragic deaths-including her four-year-old brother's which is heartbreaking. We hear Eleanor's love interest over a knight-Clotaire the Stronger and we even get to experience her strong and fantasy like relationship with Petronilla. However, after her father's many careless and artistic years as Duke of Aquitaine, he begins to become a religious man and decides to take a religious pilgrimage to a cathedral in Spain. Taking his daughters only as far as Bordeaux, he dies only months later of food poisoning he contracted from uncooked fish. Eleanor is placed under the guardianship of the King of France-Louis VI. Since Eleanor now holds more land than the king-Louis marries Eleanor to his son-14 year old Louis VII. Eleanor instantly falls in love with him. Although she meets him in the most unexpected spot-she is in the lake having jumped in with so much excitement. A shirtless boy with golden hair and a tanned chest helps her out. Only then does she realize it's her teenage husband.

Re-read in May, 2010 Eleanor: Crown Jewel of Aquitaine feels like a front: a way to teach kids "history", presented in the point-of-view of one of their own. Yes, I realize that's the whole point of the Royal Diaries books, but I expected a little more creativity presented in the story than what I received. It shouldn't FEEL like a front when you read it. I perceived this even as a kid, which is probably why I forgot all about Eleanor until I stumbled across it on goodreads.com and was reminded of its existence. Gregory is very careful to remain true to both the diary format and the ADD mindset of a fourteen-year-old girl. As a girl, I read all of the Royal Diaries books, and I honestly don't recall any of them being quite this scatter-brained. It made it hard for me as a reader to remain engaged with the story. I remember what it was like to be a fourteen-year-old; I KNOW how hard it is to stay focused. But really, Gregory, for the sake of the story KEEP IT TOGETHER. I should have gleaned more of Eleanor's personality than I did, especially considering that it's written in her point-of-view. Eleanor seems to have been deeply religious, or at the very least, unusually pious for a young teen. Other than that, I learned nothing particularly unique about her as a person. She had few wants and worries aside from her father's safety, and was never truly rebellious - sneaking out of the castle from time to time hardly counts as rebellious behavior in my book, as I would've done the same and more. She had opinions and observations about the world around her, but they don't make for a decent read. As a result, I perceived Eleanor to be a generally uninteresting person.

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