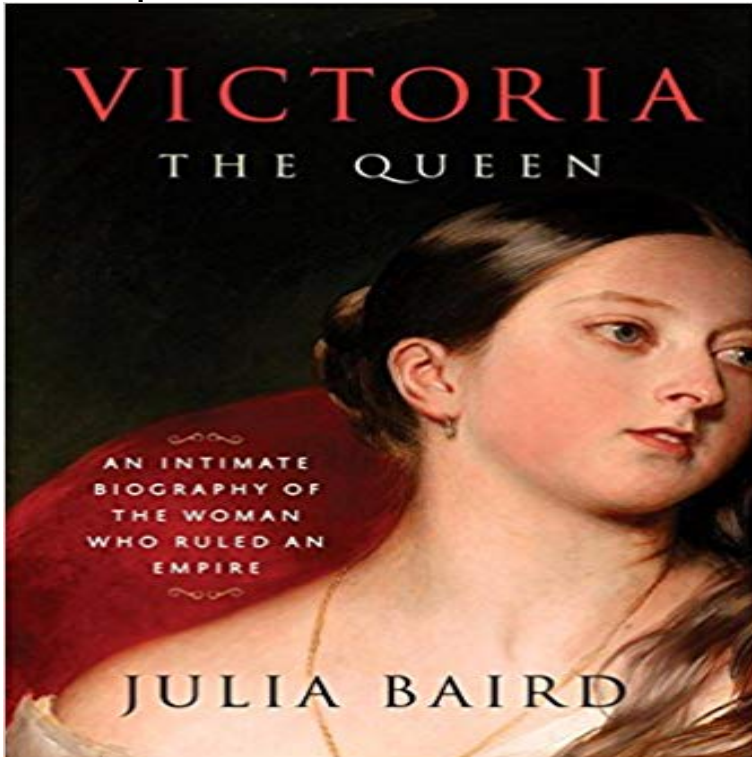


Victoria: The Queen: An Intimate Biography of the Woman Who Ruled an Empire



From International New York Times columnist Julia Baird comes a magnificent biography of Queen Victoria. Drawing on previously unpublished papers, *Victoria: The Queen* is a stunning new portrait of the real woman behind the mythic story of love and heartbreak, of devotion and grief, of strength and resilience. When Victoria was born, in 1819, the world was a very different place. Revolution would begin to threaten many of Europe's monarchies in the coming decades. In Britain, a generation of royals had indulged their whims at the public's expense, and republican sentiment was growing. The Industrial Revolution was transforming the landscape, and the British Empire was commanding ever larger tracts of the globe. Born into a world where women were often powerless, during a century roiling with change, Victoria went on to rule the most powerful country on earth with a decisive hand. Fifth in line to the throne at the time of her birth, Victoria was an ordinary woman thrust into an extraordinary role. As a girl, she defied her mother's meddling and an adviser's bullying, forging an iron will of her own. As a teenage queen, she eagerly grasped the crown and relished the freedom it brought her. At twenty years old, she fell passionately in love with Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, eventually giving birth to nine children. She loved sex and delighted in power. She was outspoken with her ministers, overstepping boundaries and asserting her opinions. After the death of her adored Albert, she began a controversial, intimate relationship with her servant John Brown. She survived eight assassination attempts over the course of her lifetime. And as science, technology, and democracy were dramatically reshaping the world, Victoria was a symbol of steadfastness and security queen of a quarter of the world's population at the height of the British Empire's reach. Drawing on sources that

include revelations about Victorias relationship with John Brown, Julia Baird brings vividly to life the fascinating story of a woman who struggled with so many of the things we do today: balancing work and family, raising children, navigating marital strife, losing parents, combating anxiety and self-doubt, finding an identity, searching for meaning. This sweeping, page-turning biography gives us the real woman behind the myth: a bold, glamorous, unbreakable queen Victoria for our times, a Victoria who endured. Advance praise for Victoria: The Queen Victoria was young enough when she assumed the throne to consult with her prime minister about her eyebrows (were they too thin?), confident enough when she married to excise the word obey from her vows. Julia Baird vividly captures her in every light, at once bold and sentimental, stubborn and deferential. Victoria: The Queen is a crisp, sparkling account of the extraordinary woman whose reign was as long as her legacy is vast. Stacy Schiff A stunning achievement . . . Neither sanitized nor mythologizing, Victoria: The Queen is a remarkably lucid, endlessly engaging account of Queen Victorias life and rule. Amanda Foreman With elegance and keen insight, Julia Baird has painted a memorable, moving, and surprising portrait of one of the most important women in history. This is a remarkable book; in Bairds hands, Victorias story resonates in our own time, shedding new light on why we live the way we do now. Jon Meacham

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