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Marlene Dietrich

Maria Riva : Marlene Dietrich before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Marlene Dietrich:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Its complicated By Pam K Be aware: This is a brilliant, enthralling memoir. But there's a lot to unpack here. Maria Riva, the cosseted, adored daughter of Marlene Dietrich, has a big story to tell. She fills it with detail, her memory seemingly photographic for interiors, gowns, jewelry, her mother's endless stream of lovers and who said what to whom. It's a tour de force, backed up by letters, telegrams, movie stills and it must be said extreme bitterness. One can't entirely blame her for that; her upbringing was abnormal, presided over by the tidal wave that was screen goddess Marlene Dietrich. And in many ways, Dietrich is inexcusable. Riva was prevented from going to school, from making friends her own age, and was turned into a handmaiden by the age of 8.

In her early teens, she was also turned over to a predatory lesbian who served as a kind of governess even as she abused Maria sexually. So while Riva grew up on legendary Hollywood sets and in the lap of 1930's luxury, she earned every moment of it in tears and trouble. As she points out, it's not easy dealing with worldwide fame as an innocent bystander. But it must be said that Riva's bitterness occasionally overflows its banks. She reveals too much sordid, unkind detail about her mother's body, her famous and infamous lovers, and Dietrich's long decline. Riva also contradicts herself from time to time, for example asserting that she remembers no laughter from the early years but then often, within pages, presenting hilarious scenes that capture Dietrich's exact intonation, wit and magnetic charm.

She also takes little responsibility for her own actions as an adult, when she could have put much more distance between herself and her overwhelming mother. With this book, one might question Riva's motives and her timing (this came out right after Dietrich died). Yet her undeniable talent captures her own and her mother's lives in all their sprawling, messy glory. Bottom line: riveting and unforgettable. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Marlene Dietrich - a daughter's viewpoint By jenjhume A fascinating book about the life of a famous movie star written by her daughter. Her daughter is caught between love and hate and admiration and envy of her famous Mother. Marlene Dietrich certainly lived a tumultuous lifestyle starting out in Bohemian Berlin between the two World Wars, onto the heyday of Hollywood in the 30s, and dangerous times during World War II. Somehow the mystique about Marlene is still here today, and it is all because she knew how to manage her career long before professional women were common. Her ideas about bringing up children are certainly not acceptable today, but nevertheless, her daughter seems to have thrived during her lifetime. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This story evoked many of my emotions - all the way from disgust and repulsion to curiosity and admiration. By Betty D. Miller This is a jaw dropping life story of a movie star more famous than I'd realized. I am close to Maria's age, but had seen few - if any - of Dietrich's movies. About half the way through the book, I became more curious to learn about Maria's life than her mother's. She kept my attention to the end of the book. Very well written.

"Gossipy...Elaborately detailed...Greatly entertaining...Riva leaves no sequin unturned." THE NEW YORK TIMES Marlene Dietrich was considered one of the most glamorous stars of her day. A determined perfectionist with an incredible ego, her beauty, her style, her sense of the outrageous, made her a star. In this candid, illuminating, and detailed biography full of photographs, her only daughter Maria Riva, tells the incredible, fascinating, story of the star's life and career, loves and hates, hits and misses, as only a daughter can. From the Trade Paperback edition.

From Library Journal As Marlene, the German-born Maria Magdalena Dietrich (1901-92) was a charismatic movie actress of the 1930s and 1940s. Like Greta Garbo, Dietrich symbolizes glamour and mystery. There are numerous books about the legend, including the star's own Marlene (LJ 4/1/89). Riva, Dietrich's daughter, here adds her account. As anticipated, Riva's perspective is unique and affecting. Using her mother's diary, radiograms, and letters, she gives proper weight to Dietrich's youth, her experience on the Berlin stage, her collaboration with director Josef Von Sternberg (e.g., *The Blue Angel*, 1930; *Morocco*, 1930), and her latter-day triumphs on stage and as a chanteuse. There are arresting tales here (father and stepfather killed in World War I; a stint entertaining U.S. troops during the Battle of the Bulge; affairs with legends of the screen and other arts) that give the reader a true grasp of both biographer and subject. Recommended for public libraries and film collections. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 9/15/92. --Kim Holston, American Inst. for Chartered Property Casualty Underwriters, Malvern, Pa. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From the Inside Flap "Gossipy...Elaborately detailed...Greatly entertaining...Riva leaves no sequin unturned." THE NEW YORK TIMES Marlene Dietrich was considered one of the most glamorous stars of her day. A determined perfectionist with an incredible ego, her beauty, her style, her sense of the outrageous, made her a star. In this candid, illuminating, and detailed biography full of photographs, her only daughter Maria Riva, tells the incredible, fascinating, story of the star's life and career, loves and hates, hits and misses, as only a daughter can. From the Trade Paperback edition. About the Author Maria Riva was born in Berlin in 1924 and is the only child of Marlene Dietrich. Maria performed in Germany and Italy as part of a USO troupe during World War II and taught acting at Fordham University upon her return to the United States. She has performed on Broadway, radio, television, and film and has been nominated for an Emmy. Maria continues an active life in California and spends time visiting her sons and grandchildren.