



## Daughters of the Nile

*Stephanie Dray*

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**Daughters of the Nile** Stephanie Dray  
Based on the true story of Cleopatra's daughter...

After years of abuse as the emperor's captive in Rome, Cleopatra Selene has found a safe harbor. No longer the pitiful orphaned daughter of the despised Egyptian Whore, the twenty year old is now the most powerful queen in the empire, ruling over the kingdom of Mauretania—an exotic land of enchanting possibility where she intends to revive her dynasty.

With her husband, King Juba II and the magic of Isis that is her birthright, Selene brings prosperity and peace to a kingdom thirsty for both. But when Augustus Caesar jealously demands that Selene's children be given over to him to be fostered in Rome, she's drawn back into the web of imperial plots and intrigues that she vowed to leave behind.

Determined and resourceful, Selene must shield her loved ones from the emperor's wrath, all while vying with ruthless rivals like King Herod. Can she find a way to overcome the threat to her marriage, her kingdom, her family, and her faith? Or will she be the last of her line?

## Daughters of the Nile Details

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Author : Stephanie Dray

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## From Reader Review Daughters of the Nile for online ebook

### BeenBunz says

Since Lily of the Nile, Selene's voice has grown stronger, more scheming, increasingly suspicious of everyone and exhausted psychologically, emotionally and physically. Wondering if this was how her mom Cleopatra relented to before her infamous death. Selene's character changes were evident when she became a mother to Dora and even more so when Ptolemy I came into play. In the beginning, her tactics were geared towards preserving her and her brothers' survival and then with the death of her brothers eventually her own survival at the hands of Augustus. When time came to protect her children, you can definitely see the desperate need to keep them away from Roman influence as much as possible.

I was most moved when Selene was able to finally separate herself from Augustus' manipulation and revert back to a more cheerful and youthful disposition. It was also fulfilling to see how Selene and Juba were able to reconcile, see past their wrongdoings onto each other and finally find true love. Call me a romantic but I have to admit that I absolutely adored the last hundred so pages depicting Selene and Juba's relatively happy ending.

Overall, the book was entertaining and a joy to read although slow paced at first. One reading this series can easily conjure elaborately colorful images to go along with the historically adapted drama illustrated through the eyes of Cleopatra's daughter.

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### Sheree says

Over the course of this trilogy Stephanie Dray has laid out the life of Cleopatra Selene from captive of Caesar Augustus to wife of Juba II and Queen of Mauretania, daughter of Isis and mother, for readers to appreciate the heart and soul, strength and frailties of this amazing woman and I've loved every minute. Daughters of the Nile is an epic conclusion, fitting for one such as Cleopatra Selene.

I was moved to tears quite a few times, that's no mean feat for an author, after all it's history, being aware of the *how and why* sometimes lessens the emotional impact. Not so with Daughters of the Nile, as Ms Dray mentions in her author's note, not a lot has been documented of Cleopatra Selene but with meticulous research of the time period, raw emotion and fictional flare she's brought Selene to life with poignant intimacy .

The Roman Empire political machinations continue, as does Augustus' manipulation of Selene (despite her independent stand) and the playing off of key players as they climb and fall from favour. But the focus is really on Selene's relationships and her growing self awareness.

So much to love ... I loved the exploration of Selene's relationships, it took this installment to new heights, the bond between Selene and her mage, Euphronius, Greek freedwoman Chryssa, Berber attendant, Tala and her relationship with daughter, Isadora, Julia (Augustus' daughter) and Octavia (Augustus' sister) to name just a few.

Selene is a doting and protective mother, I loved that the love and safety of her children and niece came first, above all, even deep-seated ambitions. I loved that Selene finally opened her heart to love with Juba, with so

much tragedy and heartache in her life, it was heartwarming to read she found a safe harbour in Juba's arms. I adored the mysticism and dark magic, I guess it sounds like I'm mentioning it in passing but it's deftly woven into the story with both intricacy and a delicate touch.

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**Recommend:** Highly ... Stephanie Dray's writing is richly atmospheric, exquisitely detailed and emotionally wrenching. Big and lush, it's a story to savour.

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### Michalea Moore says

An admission: I'm a dyed in the wool Egypt-o-phile and my interest in Augustan Rome isn't all that far behind. I read a lot of novels about those cultures/time periods. (I also read a lot of non-fiction in the same area.) Most of the novels aren't very good. They either totally blow the history, or they nail the history at the expense of the writing. There are a wretched few that blow the history and the writing.

*Stephanie Dray's final volume in the trilogy about Cleopatra Selene, the daughter of Mark Antony and Cleopatra, is the happy exception.* Even though the actual historical facts about Cleopatra Selene are somewhat sketchy, Dray beautifully brings to life a woman who stood in the shadows of some of history's greatest legends.

If you want a love story that encompasses a heroine's journey against the vivid background of Imperial Rome (and an exotic Roman vassal state) and a heroine who wields heka (magic) with the skill of Hermione Granger with sometimes tragic consequences, this is the book (and trilogy) for you.

Unlike many trilogies with only have enough material for one book but stretched to three to satisfy some market niche, I found myself alternately not wanting this trilogy to end and being completely satisfied with how it did end.

This third book can probably stand alone. Having read the previous two books and knowing the bones of the historical story, however, I can't say that for certain. And really, why cheat yourself out of the experience of reading all three?

If I have any complaints, and I have very few, my main one was that at times Cleopatra Selene seemed a bit strident. Of course, that made for a nice character flaw.

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### Ana says

I had the privilege of receiving an ARC of this book. Thank for this honor, Ms. Dray...

***"I may crumble away to dust, but my spirit remains... And in the Nile of Eternity, I shall live forever."***

For centuries, little was known about Cleopatra VII's daughter, Cleopatra Selene. And what little was

mentioned of her in the annals of history, was more about who she was related to rather than who she truly was and what she accomplished. So, while her mother was forever immortalized as a temptress, Selene slept the sleep of the just... Until Stephanie Dray, breathed life into the mouth of the forgotten queen, rescuing her from oblivion, carving her name in history once again, so that the gods, and us mortals, can recognize her in the afterlife.

Selene's parents were the infamous Cleopatra and Mark Anthony. Mark Anthony didn't recognize Octavian as Julius Caesar's heir. So by that fact alone, we can infer that Selene's life in Rome was a constant struggle. But one thing is to infer it, and another entirely different thing is to "live" it with Dray's books.

We first get to meet Selene in *Lily of the Nile*, when she was a frightened 10 year-old girl captured by Octavian after the Battle of Actium and forced to live as a hostage in Rome. In this first book, Selene struggles with the guilt of being the bearer of death to her mother, of losing her Ptolemaic kingdom, and the ambivalence between wanting to stay safe in Rome or escape with Helios and join the revolution. In this first book we also get to know about the power of the Isis cult as a precursor to Christianity, and experience the Egyptian *heka* with which Selene is blessed (cursed?).

In *Song of the Nile*, Selene is a 14 year-old bride raped by the emperor and repudiated by her husband, who has to quickly learn how to be queen of the unknown and "savage" Mauretania, all the while dancing to the dangerous beat of Augustus and Rome. This is a darker book, full of political intrigue and dark magic in which Dray proves her robust knowledge of Politics and Government in the Middle East.

And finally, after two years, Dray comes up with the amazing culmination of the series. In "Daughters of the Nile" Selene is a veteran queen at 20 years old. Political intrigue in Rome and Judea are still ever present, but they do not take center stage in Selene's life. The struggles Selene faces in this third book are much more personal. In this book, we see a different kind of woman and queen. She's portrayed as content, and sometimes even "*domesticated*". Selene is finally letting go of her past. She's making peace with her River of Time. Selene reminisces about the women in her life, about her own life, about her faith, about motherhood, and about marriage life. This book is a beautiful journey into the psyche of the Queen of Mauretania.

I have to admit that when I first started reading this book, I was missing the *heka*, but then I remembered that Selene's trigger of magic was anger. And in this book, Selene is so placid with her life as a Mauretanian queen, that there's no need for magic. Or at least, no too much need of magic.

I was shocked with the end. I honestly wasn't expecting it. But the imagery of the afterlife are so vivid and breathtaking!

It has been a grand adventure to read Dray's books, to grow as a reader while Dray grew as an author, and as Selene grew into the Queen she was born to be. I enjoyed reading Dray's series about Selene. I'm going to miss Selene. And I'm going to miss Dray's lyrical writing about Egypt.

I can't wait for Dray's next project!

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## **Mishel Forte says**

Daughters of the Nile has to be one of THE most satisfying conclusions to a trilogy I have ever read. I closed the book sighing with contentment as I wiped the remaining tears off my face. Yes, folks it was THAT good! I can't help but write this review with the previous two novels in my head. The overall reading experience was epic in my opinion. I'll try not to be a fan girl as I review this one but please excuse the moments when my cup runeth' over.

Selene has come a long way from the captured prisoner she once was as a child when she first set foot in Rome. She has now lived over two decades, gotten married, become a powerful Queen, had children of her own, and continues to stand up and defy the most powerful man in the empire. One of her biggest desires is to reclaim her rightful place in Egypt and Selene has been fighting non-stop for it. However, when her ambitions become close enough to taste and grab with two hands she hesitates. Although she's lost so much for her dreams already, can she risk losing her new family, her fragile relationship with her husband, her beloved kingdom, or the new life she has come to embrace? Selene must choose between her past and her future, as she has always had to do, and risk losing it all.

Again, I must comment on how much I love the characters in these books. I'm pleasantly surprised to report that none have been stagnant. Each person has had ample time to develop and not once did I feel overwhelmed by any of their stories. Everyone had their share of high, happy times, and low, heartbreakng times. It was amazing to see everyone treated as if this was their story to tell, not just Selene's.

Coming in under 600 pages I hardly noticed the heaviness of them. I couldn't believe how the words were flying off the pages and how I still wanted more after I finished. I have to say that the emotional peaks and low points were so numerous that I was shocked. After each critical, climactic point I felt that the story was probably ending soon and things couldn't possibly get worse and there was no way there could be more to read in the remaining pages. It has been an emotional journey, through this book especially, that has made the entire trilogy a favorite of mine. I adore this author's writing and I know I will be revisiting Selene again in the future.

I suppose I can't give all props to Stephanie for putting my emotional investment to the test time and time again. I suppose I should thank history itself and all the players involved. While Stephanie may have been expanding on true events she did so with a beautiful style and with not too much to go on if you think about it. Although I'm sure her extensive research was time-consuming and exhausting there isn't much known about Queen Cleopatra Selene, before she was Queen of Mauretania or after. And in each of the Author's Note provided I felt Stephanie was fair in explaining all, or most, of her reasons for writing the story the way she did with the information she had at hand. Basically this small rant is to give the author her deserved props for surrounding real people from the past in a beautifully brutal world that I quite frankly hated to leave. I highly, highly recommend this book and the entire trilogy as a whole. You may of course read this as a standalone but the true enjoyment and experience will come when read them all, in order and hopefully back to back.

\*\*I received a copy of this in exchange for an honest review\*\*

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## **Meg - A Bookish Affair says**

Sigh, they say that all good things have to come to an end and unfortunately, that saying extends to really good book series (oh, but couldn't they go on forever, please???). Unfortunately, "Daughters of the Nile" is the final book in Stephanie Dray's Cleopatra's Daughter trilogy. What I can tell you, is that this is a very fitting and very good ending to this trilogy. While you would be able to "get" this book without reading the first two books, I want you to go back and read the first two books (Lily of the Nile and Song of the Nile) because I love you and want you to be happy. Seriously, if you love historical fiction and magical realism, these books are for you.

As with the previous two books, Dray sweeps us up in the world of Cleopatra Selene. After being able to live a fairly free life in Mauritania, Selene and her family have to go back to Rome, which means that Selene is back in the line of fire of the Emperor and finds some others that would love to take her down along the way. All of the wheeling and dealing between the various rulers of the time take the spotlight in this book and it was absolutely fascinating to me.

One of the things that I'm going to miss most about these books is the characters. The relationships between Selene and so many of the other people in the book felt really real to me, which made the story feel even more real. Yes, Selene is a powerful leader (and I loved reading about her rule) but she still has to continue to be a wife to Juba and a mother to her children. Dray is able to show us all of these different sides of Selene, which really drew me in. I loved reading about her and I'm going to miss her.

This is a very fitting end to this series! I don't want to give anything away but I was very satisfied with this ending even if I'm in a little bit of mourning over the ending of this series.

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### **Chelsey Wolford says**

Even though this is the third book in the series, it is the first one that I read. I loved it so much that I went back and ordered books one and two in this series. I have always been intrigued with Cleopatra's life and history, but do not find as many books about her as I would often like to. This amazing series, written by Stephanie Dray, tells, and is based on the true story, of her daughter, Cleopatra Selene. The history do not know that much about this particular individual, but they can be sure that she lived and died. Dray has done her research, and it comes through in this fictional depiction of Cleopatra Selene's life!

Stephanie Dray has based this series on actual true events, but this is still a fictional account and has bits of magic, mystery, and suspense added in. The magical tidbits are subtle, but make the story complete in my opinion. Dray is a remarkable storyteller and makes the magic seem very natural as it takes its rightful place in the storyline. The world building is just as phenomenal as the magic involved. The characters, their lives, and their place in history are all thoroughly developed with added suspense and crazy twists and turns. It feels as if it could come of the page at any given moment!

I am very anxious to go back and read the first two books, Lily of the Nile and Song of the Nile because after all the reviews I am reading, I am finding that it is necessary. People give these books such praise all across the Internet. I am finding that the series follows Cleopatra Selene from the time she was a teenager, and watches her grow and change through each book. I love series that monitor the progress of both major and minor characters over the course of time!

\*\*\*A copy of this book was provided to me by the publishers at Berkley Trade in exchange for my honest review\*\*\*

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### **Vida Torralba says**

I've always been fascinated with the ancient world so this series was a treat to finish. I've read the prologues and epilogues that the author was awesome to include to give the story its historical legs. The amount of research that went into writing these books was really impressive to the point of reading about Cleopatra Selene in the wiki feels like reading a scholarly version. Good job, author!

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### **Erin Tanner says**

I had the privilege of reviewing a proof of Daughters of the Nile. I must say that Stephanie Dray has another masterpiece on her hands. Daughters of the Nile is the final novel in the Nile series in which Ms. Dray has chronicled the life of Cleopatra VII's daughter Cleopatra Selene. The author has always done her research and it shows again in this well written novel. A picture of the time and all the political ambitions and intrigues of all are masterfully painted by the author. What makes Ms. Dray's novels stand out from other historical fiction out there is the relationships she portrays between the characters.

The relationship between Selene and Augustus is twisted, complex and heart-wrenching and brings things full circle. Whereas Augustus condemned Selene's mother as a harlot and sought to destroy the legacy of Cleopatra and Julius Caesar, what this novel reveals is that Augustus desires the same thing his uncle did. He desires to have his very own Cleopatra and rule the world before leaving it behind to a son of their blood. I enjoyed the symmetry between the relationships. I also particularly enjoyed that although Selene desired very much in the beginning to rule the world as her mother once did, eventually she realized that ambition was a destroyer. Her final words to Augustus were those of a brave woman who decided that she would be tortured and used no more.

The relationship between Selene and Juba was not without turmoil and there were so many obstacles in their path that I thought they would never truly find their way to each other. When they finally did, truly become husband and wife in every since of the word I found myself saddened that they did not have all that much time together to bask in their newfound love.

In Daughters of the Nile, Selene once again experiences tragedy. Death seems to follow her family no matter how hard she tries to prevent it. I found myself weeping for a woman who had only known such unspeakable tragedies during her lifetime. But at the same time, I found myself admiring her faith and her inner strength. Down to the moment, Cleopatra Selene takes her last breath she is a fighter.

Ms. Dray has done a fantastic job of creating a world of complex characters, none of whom can be described as wholly good or evil. Every character has their flaws. One might even argue that Selene had the same fatal flaw that her mother did. Presented with a chance to rule the world, she chose love instead. Just as Cleopatra paid a price for her love, so did Selene but it was a price any mother would've paid.

I find myself shedding a few tears that this is the last Nile novel. I have enjoyed going along this journey as Ms. Dray sheds light on a character many have wondered about but not have known much about. Every novel in this series has been a terrific read and the conclusion will make you happy, make you angry, and make you cry. But most importantly Daughters of the Nile will force you to examine many things we take

for granted in life as we remember a woman that suffered much but yet persevered. Ms. Dray has made me a lifelong fan and I can't wait to see what she writes next.

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### **Margaret says**

(arc provided by author for an honest review)

This is book #3 in the Cleopatra's Daughter series, competing the series which started with Lily of the Nile and Song of the Nile. You might be able to read this as a stand alone, but I don't recommend it, it is just too wonderful a series to miss any part of it.

How do I begin to review this book? It is hard at times to do a review justice without any spoilers and I don't want to spoil anyone's enjoyment of this wonderful book. It was a fitting conclusion to an awesome series and I am very sad that it is over. This is a part of history that I know very little about, plus (according to the author's notes) there is not a lot of information available. Stephanie Dray filled in the blanks perfectly and wrote a very believable and emotional story.

This was one of those books, that I didn't rush through. I knew it was the end of the series but I just took my time and enjoyed the ride. First introduced to Selene when she is taken to Rome (in Triumph), she is now married and Queen of Mauretania. This book is about relationships, and there are a number of them in here. There is Selene's relationship with Augustus, which is dark and warped. He wants control of her, her children and it was very interesting to see how that situation continued to develop (really I want to say more, but a major spoiler would most likely take place).

Her relationship with King Juba, her husband was not without turmoil. I really enjoyed watching that play out, the author has a way of writing that made the conflicts genuine and one can't help feeling the emotions of certain situations. Yeah I shed a few tears too.

So much more is offered, Selena's relationship with her daughter, Isadora, her friend Julia (Augustus daughter), Livia, the people of Mauretania, even Herod. There is also King Juba and Augustus's relationship, oh I could go on and on. As you can tell there is a lot going on in this book and it is written in such a way that it was not overwhelming with everything flowing together perfectly.

This book has so much to offer and I am very grateful to have received an ARC.

This book will appeal to those that are interested in HF Rome, Egypt, Isis, Cleopatra and Caesar Augustus

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### **Gabrielle Carolina says**

We know very little about Cleopatra Selene. That she lived and died we can be sure; no matter when or how she died it is certain she has achieved new life in the novels of Stephanie Dray. I believe Selene would be proud of her resurrection.

Dray is a master of her plots, never once letting them get the best of her, always willing to sacrifice, bend or manipulate to achieve an outcome- much like her Cleopatra.

As a proud supporter of the Nile novels I cannot begin to express my deep love for Cleopatra Selene, Stephanie Dray's mind and mastery, or this third installment in the Selene trilogy. It is, without a doubt, the boldest, and most brilliant story arc Dray has penned in Queen Selene's name.

If reading were a public affair, rather than a luxury indulged mostly in private, I would rise to give Daughters of the Nile an ovation. The tears upon the page and my heartfelt review will have to suffice.

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### **Stephanie Thornton says**

Although the first two novels in Stephanie Dray's series on Cleopatra Selene had been on my reading list for a long time, I ended up reading Daughters of the Nile first. Needless to say, I was hooked and had to go back and read the entire series, which resulted in several nights of lost sleep. Cleopatra Selene is the epitome of a strong, passionate heroine who will do whatever it takes to outwit Augustus and Rome's plans for her. This is the perfect conclusion to an amazing trilogy on one of history's most intriguing women!

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### **Audra (Unabridged Chick) says**

Wow. Wow. It's been a few days since I've finished this one, and I'm still struggling with how to articulate just how much I *adored* this book. Loved it so much I want to just yell at everyone in all caps to convey my deep passion for it!

*Daughters of the Nile* is the final volume in Dray's trilogy about Cleopatra's daughter, Cleopatra Selene. (I've reviewed both the previous volumes, *Lily of the Nile* and *Song of the Nile*.)

At this point in Selene's journey, she's begun openly resisting Roman emperor Caesar Augustus in her endeavor to fully own her life. After struggling with the heavy weight of her family's name and legacy, the lure of ruling Egypt always tempting her, Selene has paid for her ambitions -- and what was just her burden is now affecting others: her husband, King Juba, her daughter, Isadora, her niece, Phythodorida. But pursuing her own dream isn't easy nor gifted to her by Augustus, and as with the previous novels, Dray doesn't coddle the reader nor hold back on the brutality, cruelty, and gutting reality of life for women in this era.

This is a historical fantasy, technically, but Dray's use of magic in this series is subtle and understated and felt so natural that I never noticed it. The characters aren't using magic to enchant people or get work done; like everything else in this series, using magic comes at a considerable cost, and the decision to evoke magic is weighed carefully.

Dray's storytelling skill is just marvelous, and seen not only in this book but in the trilogy over all. Selene's life is one of tragedy, and yet, as a heroine she is dynamic, determined, and dedicated toward getting what is hers. Dray artfully conveys Selene's growth, from a young prisoner of war in *Lily of the Nile* to a teenaged monarch and mother struggling with demons and her desperate desire to win at all costs in *Song of the Nile* to, finally, a woman fully realizing what must be sacrificed to save what she loves in *Daughters of the Nile*.

There are no static characters in these books; everyone changes, grows, develops, and their actions make complete sense. Even the twisted, torturous Augustus -- a monster -- had moments of humanity, and had

characters who loved him as much as they loathed him.

And oh, how I loved these characters. Dray is as hard on everyone else as she is on Selene and to say Dray gutted me is an understatement. As I was finishing this book, my wife woke to find me sobbing -- shoulder-shaking sobs! -- at 3am. I had my heart broken about ten times in this book, and the way Dray built up, drew out, and brought all that pain and pathos to life was just astounding. I loved every agonizing minute.

Here's the bottom line: *Daughters of the Nile* might be one of the best concluding volumes in a series I've ever read, and Dray's Cleopatra Selene trilogy among the best historical fiction trilogies out there. It has everything for hungry readers of historical fiction: rich and atmospheric details that evoke a foreign time and place, a standout cast of characters that live and breath, resonant themes and deep emotional interactions that are impossible to shake off, and some deliciously disturbing soap opera-y elements in case you were feeling safe.

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### **Marci says**

This was just amazing! Every time I put this book down I felt the need to read just a few more pages....I couldn't get enough! This last chapter in the amazing life of Cleopatra Selene is the deepest, most enthralling by far. Deep emotional characters, amazing attention to places, descriptions, and details, this book had me at page one! Ms. Dray has a way of bringing her wonderful stories to life, and sucking you in page by page until the end! I loved the magic, the history, the characters, the romance, and the heartbreak. This truly was the greatest of her three book series. Thank you Stephanie Dray for the opportunity to read and review this amazing piece of historical fiction! I have thoroughly enjoyed the ride! You have reminded me why you are one of my most favorite authors, and I cannot wait to see what you come out with next! .... I have received this pre release in exchange for an honest review, and I am honestly amazed!!!

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### **Fantasy Literature says**

Daughters of the Nile concludes Stephanie Dray's trilogy about Selene, the daughter of Cleopatra, who survived the fall of her mother's kingdom and went on to become a queen herself. I've never been quite sure how to categorize this series — is it fantasy? is it historical fiction with magic realism? — but I've certainly been enjoying it.

In Lily of the Nile, we saw Selene as a young girl coming of age; in Song of the Nile we saw her dealing with the issues of young womanhood in addition to the precarious political situation in which she lived. In this third volume, we follow Selene as a mature married ruler with children. She and her husband, King Juba, have taken tentative steps toward making their marriage a true partnership as well as a political alliance, but the relationship has been poisoned with old hurts and mistrust for a long time, and ... Read More:  
<http://www.fantasyliterature.com/review/daughters-of-the-nile-stephanie-dray>

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