

Cleopatra

Jacob Abbott

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Jacob Abbott was a well-known 19th century historian who wrote biographies on various leaders and famous individuals, including this one about the last Egyptian pharaoh, Cleopatra. During one of the most turbulent periods in the history of Rome, men like Julius Caesar, Mark Antony, and Octavian participated in two civil wars that would spell the end of the Roman Republic and determine who would become the Roman emperor. In the middle of it all was history's most famous woman, the Egyptian pharaoh Cleopatra (69-30 B.C.), who famously seduced both Caesar and Antony and thereby positioned herself as one of the most influential people in a world of powerful men.

Cleopatra was a captivating figure even to contemporary Romans and the ancient world, as Plutarch's quote suggests, and she was a controversial figure who was equally reviled and praised through the years, depicted as a benevolent ruler and an evil seductress, sometimes at the same time. Over 2,000 years after her death, everything about Cleopatra continues to fascinate people around the world, from her lineage as a Ptolemaic pharaoh, her physical features, the manner in which she seduced Caesar, her departure during the Battle of Actium, and her famous suicide. And despite being one of the most famous figures in history, there is still much mystery surrounding her, leading historians and archaeologists scouring Alexandria, Egypt for clues about her life and the whereabouts of her royal palace and tomb.



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