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In Mozart's Shadow: His Sister's Story



Synopsis

Nannerl Mozart was a musical prodigy who seemed to have a brilliant future. But once her younger brother, Wolfgang, began composing symphonies at the age of five, her career and talents were utterly eclipsed. Here, at last, is Nannerl's heart-wrenching tale. It's the story of her undying passion for music; her relationship with her "miracle boy" brother; and her life as the "other Mozart," the one forgotten by history. The acclaimed Carolyn Meyer has written a powerful historical novel about a little-known but gifted musician who never stopped dreaming. Includes an author's note.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Beautifully evoked in every way, this is the story of the forgotten Mozart: his charming, pretty, highly gifted musical sister Nannerl. Beginning in the backwater town of Salzburg in the early 1760's, the father of the family Leopold Mozart (who was a gifted composer himself), realized his six year old son Wolfgang and eleven year old daughter Nannerl were extraordinary musicians and toured them all over Europe to play before royalty and the elite. But the spirited, imaginative boy Wolfgang Mozart soon drew all the attention. Nannerl was a gifted keyboardist and he was a genius in performing and composition. For the rest of her long life she would live in his shadow. As an 18th century woman, Nannerl could have made her way in music as a singer, but she was not a singer

and thus her love of music, which she had shared with her little brother and which equaled his, largely lay frustrated within her. All the family energy went to further her brother's career, for as a man and a composer, he could one day support them well. But he grew up and away from his father's possessive hold and Nannerl went on to make her own life. One so loves Nannerl in this sympathetic book as she tries gently to find who she is apart from her brilliant brother and domineering father. The Mozart family, friends and times are warmly, wonderfully drawn. She grows up, tries to find love and to compromise and still, even as her correspondence with her beloved brother who is now famous in Vienna draws to an end, she is determined to keep the music she shared with him as a child alive in her. In the end this novel is not just for someone who wants to read about the Mozart family, but for any girl or young woman who ever struggled between adoration and envy of a brilliant brother and goes on loving him long after he has left her for a brighter life. I am the author of the novel *MARRYING MOZART* (Viking Penguin).

I have loved every single one of Carolyn Meyer's books. She draws characters so life-like that we grow to love each and every one of them like we personally know them. Princess Catherine has always been my favorite, yet Nannerl might take her place. Nannerl Mozart is the older and very talented sister of the more famous Wolfgang. She never gives up hope that one day she will be sent to Italy to study, therefore becoming Europe's best female clavier player. However, her control-freak and ambitious father is concentrated fully on young Wolferl, who he believes can bring fame and fortune to the family. Much of their childhood is spent traveling to the grand courts, but when Nannerl wants to go to Italy with her brother she is denied. She has been left home and abandoned mentally by her father. Throughout the book several love interests pop up, but her true love is an aging captain named Armand, who is by her side all the time even when her father forbids them from marrying. The writing in this book is flawless. Although a little dragging at parts, I found the detail and imagining very accurate. The only comment I have is that characters with no particular significance to the story, like Davey, shouldn't really have been put in as they have nothing to add. As this is a work that has real people in it, I understand why Nannerl didn't have a happy ending, but at the same time I wish she became a big star and married Armand. But that's history, so it cannot be changed for romantics such as me. This new Carolyn Meyer book pleases. Nannerl is a strong and hopeful girl, and she might become your new favorite character. If you enjoyed the author's other books, you will certainly like this one.

I enjoyed learning about Mozart's life and I did not realize that he had a such talented sister. What I

didn't care for was all the whining the main character, Mozart's sister, did pretty much throughout the entire book. I plan to read more books pertaining to the topic.

Carolyn Meyer again spins a touching and beautiful tale, imagined from the point of view of Mozart's sister, Nannerl. The frustration talented girls must have felt at that time, especially one who was constantly in the "shadow" of her famous younger brother, is eloquently depicted in this engaging novel. I'm always on the lookout for well-researched novels about composers, and fortunately more and more of them have appeared in recent years. I especially appreciate when these stories are told from a female perspective, giving voice to the "unsung heroines" who so often played a major role in the lives and artistries of their more famous male counterparts. Sarah Bruce Kelly
Author of THE RED PRIEST'S ANNINA

I was thrilled to see a new Carolyn Meyer book! I own four other books by her (including the Young Royals Series) and I continue to be huge fan! I thoroughly enjoyed this book. She did a great job describing Nannerl's life while not forgetting about events in Mozart's life. I think it was a great subject to write a novel about and I am thrilled that I gained some new insight into a woman I had never heard of before! It was a great read and Carolyn Meyer did not disappoint me at all. I highly recommend it!

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