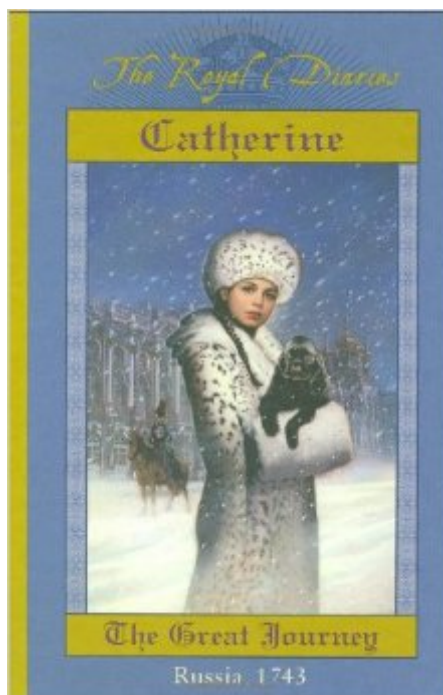


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# Catherine: The Great Journey, Russia, 1743 (The Royal Diaries)



## Synopsis

Scholastic is proud to present the final installment of The Royal Diaries series. Drama and intrigue explode in the story of young Princess Catherine's incredible journey to greatness. Fourteen-year-old Prussian princess Sophia finds herself entangled in her mother's efforts to arrange a marriage between Sophia and Charles-Peter, a young German duke and nephew of the Russian empress Elizabeth. As Sophia's mother moves to make the match, she and Sophia must travel from their humble home in Zerbst, Prussia, to Russia--the kingdom of Elizabeth. There, Sophia is renamed Catherine and married to Charles-Peter, but she watches helplessly as her family is torn from her, her own mother is involved in a spying ring against the empress, and all that is familiar to her disappears.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 870L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 169 pages

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Product Dimensions: 6.9 x 4.7 x 0.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (32 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #187,647 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > European](#) #171 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Europe](#) #338 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Royalty](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

It is 1743, and fourteen-year-old Sophie is a princess of Anhalt-Zerbst in Prussia. Sophie's father is not royalty, and her cruel mother, Princess Johanna Elizabeth, is obsessed with improving her own status through her daughter's marriage. To that end, she is determined to do everything possible in order to get Sophie chosen by Empress Elizabeth of Russia to marry her nephew Peter, heir to the throne. Soon, Sophie and her mother must travel to Russia in order to meet Empress Elizabeth. Sophie is indeed chosen to be Peter's wife, but her life changes completely as a result. She must

adopt a new language, religion, and even a new name, Catherine. I've enjoyed reading The Royal Diaries books for many years, and I was sad to see this would be the final book in the series. However, I was glad to see it would be written by one of my favorite authors from the series, Kristiana Gregory. I enjoyed this book a lot, but I do wish it had been longer and had more detail. I would still recommend this book to all fans of the series.

The year is 1743, and 14-year-old Prussian Princess Sophie Augusta Fredericka of Anhalt-Zerbst - better known as Catherine the Great - is living an above poverty-stricken life with her family - which includes both a verbally and physically abusive mother - when Sophie is accosted by people from the Russian court, and looked over to see if she will be the "right" wife for Peter - the grandson of Peter the Great - who happens to be the heir to the Russian throne. When it is decided that she may be satisfactory, Sophie is swept off to Russia to meet Empress Elizabeth, who chooses Sophie to be Peter's wife, and changes her name to Catherine. Within just a matter of time, Sophie is forced to change her religion, and the language she speaks in an attempt to please Empress Elizabeth. But as the months wear on, Catherine feels as if her "true" world is moving farther and farther away from her, and there is no one in Russia who can ease her homesickness. I've always been interested in the history of Russia, even more so since reading the ROYAL DIARIES book ANASTASIA: THE LAST GRAND DUCHESS by Carolyn Meyer, which is why I was quite eager to get my hands on Kristiana Gregory's CATHERINE: THE GREAT JOURNEY. Catherine is an interesting historical figure, whose somewhat tragic and torturous life make readers sympathize with her. Gregory's descriptions of Empress Elizabeth are quite delightful, and truly make the reader fear her wrath. Gregory has tapped the inner Catherine, and come up with quite an enjoyable piece of historical fiction. Erika Sorocco

Book Review Columnist for The Community Bugle Newspaper

Sophie is a 14 year old princess and lives her simple life in Zerbst, Prussia. She is constantly under the burden of her abusive mother who not only damages her emotionally but physically too. Sophie's father doesn't carry royal blood and her desperate mother is a princess from a small royal family. Sophie's damaged personality is torn and torn each day as her mother insults her and continuously presses her to marry princes so that her family will be related to 'real' royalty. So one day, after many portraits of herself have been taken to various royalties abroad, Sophie is in shock when she finds that she had been chosen by the Empress of Russia- Elizabeth, to marry her nephew and become duchess and maybe one day queen of all Russia. Leaving her beloved family behind, Sophie and her mother leave for Moscow, unaware of the terrible journey across the

ice-lands they would have to take. But when they finally reach the city of snow- Moscow, Sophie realises that Elizabeth is dangerous and is in even more shock when her own mother plots against her. Sophie will have to hold her scheming mother and her tearing-apart life together, before both split. For Sophie, many things change: her language, her religion and most of all her name which is changed from Sophie to Catherine. In this beautiful finale to the Royal Diary Series, Kristiana Gregory portrays Princess Catherine of Russia in her teenage years. When she had to leave her home-land to a place of hope and watch her whole life fall apart. I have loved nearly every book in this beautiful series and I farewell the Royal Diaries hoping the best for it's writers. All around the world, children's hearts have already been changed by the diaries of: Elizabeth I, Cleopatra VII, Isabel, Anastasia, Nzingha, Kaiulani, Victoria, Sondok, Jahanara, Eleanor, Kristina, Elisabeth, Kazunomiya, Green Jay, Redbird, Anacaona, Weetamoo, Marie-Anoinette, Mary of Scotts, Anacaona and Catherine. A beautiful story.

I loved this series of books as a kid. Any girl who dreams of being a princess will enjoy it. There are a dozen other books in the series although they are written by other authors. The target age group is upper elementary school. These also allow children to build reading stamina. They are around 200 pages but because of the diary format kids can read them quickly.

These books do not grab the attention as the Girls of Many Lands series. They're okay but children lost interest easily where with the other series, they were anxious to have the next reading session to find out what happened next.

I ordered this book from Big Hearted Books. It arrived on time and was great quality. I was very satisfied. Also, I greatly enjoy reading the book. I only have three complaints: 1) it was very detailed through the first 3/4 of the book. After that, the entries become more sparse and far less detailed. It makes the ending somewhat ambiguous and disappointing; 2) the majority of the entries are not dated, which makes determining the time that has elapsed, and keeping up with the actual historical record, difficult; 3) the afterword with the information about Catherine the Great and her life is extremely basic, giving really no other information about her that the other books in the series normally give. Overall, 5/5 stars for order from the company; 3.5/5 stars for the actual book. However, I definitely recommend it, as Catherine the Great is a wonderful and very intriguing woman. :-)

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