



# Enchantress of Paris: A Novel of the Sun King's Court

*Marci Jefferson*

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**Fraught with conspiracy and passion, the Sun King's opulent court is brought to vivid life in this captivating tale about a woman whose love was more powerful than magic.**

The alignment of the stars at Marie Mancini's birth warned that although she would be gifted at divination, she was destined to disgrace her family. Ignoring the dark warnings of his sister and astrologers, Cardinal Mazarin brings his niece to the French court, where the forbidden occult arts thrive in secret. In France, Marie learns her uncle has become the power behind the throne by using her sister Olympia to hold the Sun King, Louis XIV, in thrall.

Desperate to avoid her mother's dying wish that she spend her life in a convent, Marie burns her grimoire, trading Italian superstitions for polite sophistication. But as her star rises, King Louis becomes enchanted by Marie's charm. Sensing a chance to grasp even greater glory, Cardinal Mazarin pits the sisters against each other, showering Marie with diamonds and silks in exchange for bending King Louis to his will.

Disgusted by Mazarin's ruthlessness, Marie rebels. She sacrifices everything, but exposing Mazarin's deepest secret threatens to tear France apart. When even King Louis's love fails to protect Marie, she must summon her forbidden powers of divination to shield her family, protect France, and help the Sun King fulfill his destiny.

## Enchantress of Paris: A Novel of the Sun King's Court Details

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Author : Marci Jefferson

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## From Reader Review Enchantress of Paris: A Novel of the Sun King's Court for online ebook

### Kate Quinn says

There's lots of historical fiction out there about women who sleep with kings. Marci Jefferson is more interested in women who turn kings down, and it makes for such a refreshing change. Her debut novel "Girl on the Golden Coin" (a book I was very happy to blurb) starred Frances Stuart, a woman who turned down not just one but several kings, and "Enchantress of Paris" continues the theme with Marie Mancini, a beauty of the French court who, it could be argued, turned a young Louis XIV into the powerhouse monarch he became later in life. Marie makes a refreshing heroine, unwilling as she is to sacrifice independence or self-respect even for the love of a king, and her little band of beautiful, occult-minded sisters are all interesting enough to star in books of their own. Recommended!

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### Ruth Chatlien says

Although I've certainly read about Louis XIV's other mistresses, I had no idea that the young king had once been so enamored of Marie Mancini that he was willing to risk his kingdom's safety to marry her. What makes this relationship even more intriguing is that Mancini was the niece of the wily Cardinal Mazarin, who was the power behind the throne at the beginning of the Sun King's reign, and the Cardinal had no intention of letting his niece ruin his plans for an important matrimonial alliance for the king. It was interesting to see that particular conflict play out in this novel, since I dealt with something similar in *The Ambitious Madame Bonaparte* (which portrays the result of Napoleon's opposition to his youngest brother's marriage to the American Elizabeth Patterson). I found the portrayal of Marie Mancini quite sympathetic and the book well written. As with many novels of this time period, the story explores the controversial use of magic to induce love or weaken enemies, but I did not think this element was overemphasized. Instead, Mancini's struggle to find happiness and avoid being her uncle's pawn is front and center.

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### Erin says

Find this and other reviews at: <http://flashlightcommentary.blogspot...>

I got excited about Marci Jefferson's *Enchantress of Paris* the moment I learned its release date. I'd fallen in love with *Girl on the Golden Coin: A Novel of Frances Stuart* in 2013 and had high hopes for the author's sophomore release. I knew nothing about Marie Mancini or Cardinal Mazarin, but I was excited at the prospect and eagerly anticipated watching the unfamiliar story unfold under Jefferson's pen.

Did the book live up to my expectations? Yes and no. There were a lot of things I loved about the story, but I'd be lying if I didn't admit the time I spent with this particular narrative left mixed impressions in its wake.

Like many of my fellow reviewers, I fell for Jefferson's heroine. Marie is intelligent, passionate, romantic, and tenacious, but my favorite aspect of her being is that she is vulnerable. This is a seventeenth century woman, but the flaws Jefferson incorporated in her characterization make Louis' mistress empathetic, engaging and relatable.

I've not spent much time on fictional accounts of the Sun King, but I thought Jefferson's interpretation of Louis XIV equally noteworthy. Young and idealistic, he is portrayed as a monarch still growing into the duties and responsibilities of his position. He is unsure of himself and easily manipulated, but his growing confidence endears him to the reader and gives them reason to overlook, or at least accept, his personal shortcomings.

I enjoyed the politics Jefferson folded into the narrative as well as the social drama experienced by her cast. I felt the multiple allegiances, rivalries and ambitions depicted within these pages authentically convoluted and appreciated the effort that went into crafting such a tangled web of pretension and purpose. I also thought the novel convincingly atmospheric and savored the descriptive details scattered throughout Marie's story.

That said, there were several elements I thought might have been stronger if they'd been more fully developed. I liked the ambiguity of the magic depicted within these pages, but I was disappointed at how thoroughly the theme faded as the story progressed. Marie's maid Morena fascinated me, but her character arc ultimately felt incomplete, unfinished and fragmentary in my eyes.

Olympia, Hortense and Marianne boasted similar potential, but despite their fascinating and controversial legacies, the trials of Marie's sisters go virtually unacknowledged. Don't misunderstand, I truly adore the story as written, but I couldn't help wishing she'd spotlighted the girls as Perinot did Marguerite and Eleanor in *Sister Queens* or Quinn did Cornelia, Lollia, Diana, and Marcella in *Daughters of Rome*.

Do I regret the time I spent on *Enchantress of Paris*? Hardly. Jefferson is a gifted storyteller and I adore the fiction she crafted. I believe more could have been done with the material, but I've no complaints of what appears within these pages and look forward to her next release.

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## **Rosy says**

This review was written for *The Review Diaries*

You can read the full review [here](#)

## **Huge thanks to Netgalley and St Martin's Press/Thomas Dunne Books for sending me a copy in exchange for an honest review**

I love a well written historical novel that allows me to immerse myself in another country or time, but sadly they can often be a little bit hit and miss with historical accuracy, language or detailing, so I'm always hesitant when starting a new historical novel as to what I might actually get. Luckily 'Enchantress of Paris' was one of those rare, stunningly written and researched novels that swept me up and away into the early days of the court of the Sun King – Louis XIV.

This novel was a sumptuous treat, offering a peep hole into France in the mid-1600s. The food, the balls, the clothes, the revelry and scandal – it's all there, beautifully chronicled. It's a rich and enthralling narrative led by a fantastic heroine. Marie was headstrong and wilful, determined and clever. I loved watching her transformation from the start, watching her learn the power plays and games and begin to play on her own terms. Her and her sisters were so refreshingly outrageous, so determined to be themselves in a time when that was frowned upon, and it was a delight to read. What made it even more fantastic was reading the author's note at the end and realising just how much historical fact has been blended seamlessly in and how much of the novel is real. Nothing will ever be perfectly accurate, but this novel did an incredible job of pulling so many factual historical sources and turning them into a truly incredible story.

All of the characters were brilliantly constructed, but it is truly Marie who gives the story heart and soul. I tore through the novel and loved immersing myself in another period of French history that I was sorely ignorant of. It's a wonderful novel to add to my collection of historical fiction that is slowly filling in my gaps of French history, and is definitely my favourite to date.

The writing is beautiful, the setting superb and as I've said, the characters wonderfully real and flawed. It was the kind of novel I dream of, one to sink into and enjoy. To be swept away by and to fall in in love with.

My only complaints would be the sheer volume of titles and names that you need to keep up with – who is related, who is married, who is so and so's mistress. There's a handy list to keep you up to date of who's who right at the start of the novel which should alleviate the problem, but alas because I was reading it on my kindle, trying to shuffle back and forth between list and book became increasingly frustrating. Book readers won't have such limitations though, and I'm looking forward to going back and reading this one again in book form and thoroughly enjoying it. And on a slightly more picky note the descriptions of some parts of Lyon felt a little off. Perhaps it was me simply being confused, but some of the mapping of the city felt a little off compared to the city I know. Something that were I not living here I wouldn't have picked up on at all.

If you love historical novels, or fancy a well informed and sumptuous peek at a fascinating period in French history, this is a must read. It dances the line between factual and fictional perfectly giving the perfect blend of realism and compelling story that will sweep you away. Marci is definitely an author that I'm going to watch, and I'm looking forward to catching up on her first novel 'Girl on the Golden Coin'

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

I'd been dying to get my hands on this book solely because I adored Jefferson's debut novel, *Girl on the Golden Coin*. And while I loved that book, I think I might love this one more. It has another charming, convincing heroine whose voice sealed my adoration from the first page, evocative historical details, and a dramatic plot that made me race to the last page.

Set during the reign of the young Louis XIV, the titular enchantress is Marie Mancini, an Italian noblewoman and niece of the powerful Cardinal Mazarin. She and her beautiful sisters are better known as the Mazarinettes for their obedience to their ambitious uncle, who is the close personal adviser to King Louis.

Mazarin has no qualms about throwing his nieces into the king's arms to keep the monarch's attention, and Marie's older sister Olympia is Louis' current mistress. But Marie and Louis have an immediate, intense connection, and Mazarin doesn't hesitate to encourage Marie's relationship with Louis when Olympia becomes pregnant. But Mazarin doesn't count on the true passion between Marie and Louis, nor Marie's intense desire to free the young monarch from her uncle's clutches.

As with Jefferson's debut, it's the heroine that so seduces me, and in this case, Marie -- clever, smitten, and conflicted -- won me immediately. She's from an intensely ambitious family and has no delusions about the expectations of herself and her sisters, yet in Jefferson's hands, Marie manages to hold onto youthful wistfulness, optimism, and naivete. I was so caught up in Marie's dream that found myself hoping Jefferson managed to change history to give Marie her happy ending.

There's a complicated swirl of plot surrounding Marie and Louis -- war with Spain, the Mancini's family connection to witchcraft and astrology, marriage contracts and other noble concerns -- and Jefferson

manages to make these elements effortlessly connect without bogging down the story and narrative flow. And even with the strong romantic thread in the novel, Marie's story is really that of freedom -- from her uncle's tyranny, from imprisonment in a convent or a forced marriage -- and coming-of-age when one's value was assigned, not seen.

This is a Top Ten of 2015 read for me, and cinches my status as a Marci Jefferson fangirl. Francophiles and fans of royal hist fic, get this immediately! For anyone wanting a splashy summer read, enjoy this one on the beach (perhaps with a few macarons!).

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### **Angel Hatfield says**

Marie had been in an Abbey and her uncle Cardinal Jules Mazarin took her out and took her to the french court. Marie was intelligent, passionate, romantic, stubborn but at the same time vulnerable. King Louis XIV was also known as the Sun King. Louis was young, idealistic, and growing into his duties and responsibilities to his country. Cardinal Mazarin is a close personal adviser to the young king. Actually Cardinal Mazarin and the king's' mother pretty much have control of Louis. Marie's older sister Olympia is the king's current mistress but then he met Marie and there was an intense connection between the two. The connection between Louis and Marie does turn into true love so much so that Louis is ready to leave the throne to be with Marie. Marie is the one who helped Louis be the strong and good king he became. Marie wants to free Louis of her uncle the cardinal. Cardinal Mazarin did a lot of bad things to make himself richer and to ruin the lives of his nieces and nephews. Also the king's mother and cardinal Mazarin considers Marie's and Louis's love forbidden and do whatever they can to keep the two apart. Marie's life also takes her across France, Spain and Italy she isn't always at court.

'This story has it all : betrayal, a king coming into himself, secrets, drama, pregnancy, forbidden love, greed, manipulation betrayal, the french court and pain and a lot more what more could you ask for ?, The story was excellent and I believe close to the time frame and how it really was . It even brought tears to my eyes at times. Also those beautiful letters between Louis and Marie certainly pulled at my heartstrings. The characters were off the wall Cardinal Mazarin was so vile you hated him more and more as the story went on as well as the king's own mother. But the two people that of course stood out were King Louis and Marie and the twists and turns they went through. Just an excellent read and I highly recommend.

I received an ARC of this story for an honest review.

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### **The Lit Bitch says**

This novel was wonderful! I have read Marci Jefferson's other novel and fell in love with her writing style! This book was full of romance, power struggles, and of course rich historic details. I felt like I was actually in the French court seeing all the beautiful dresses and dances.

I loved Marie...she started out a little naive but not annoyingly so, and grew into this smart, strong, intelligent, cunning woman. I thought she made the best choice that she could in the end and it was the perfect way to end their love story.

The King was charming and easily likable as the romantic interest. I thought he was appropriately idealistic and hopeful that he would actually get a choice in his life but when met with reality his character responded appropriately.

Their relationship was very real and believable. I know it's based on their real life affair but with historical

fiction there is always creative license, and in this instance, the author made well constructed characters that did believable things. Every thing they did had a purpose and it was completely logical and flowed wonderfully.

Jefferson's story telling style is straight to the point with flourishes of romance that easily hook readers in. I had that with *GIRL ON THE GOLDEN COIN* and was quickly pulled into the story with this novel as well! One thing that I love about Jefferson is that she writes about really intriguing women who don't get the same spotlight as other famous women in history like Anne Boleyn.

While I was reading this book, I was really interested in hearing more about Hortense Mancini and what her life and love affairs were like. I would gladly read anything by Jefferson, she is a strong voice in the historical fiction genre and mixes fact with fiction seamlessly!

See my full review [here](#)

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## Jenny Q says

After thoroughly enjoying Marci Jefferson's debut, *Girl on the Golden Coin: A Novel of Frances Stuart*, I couldn't wait to get my hands on *Enchantress of Paris*. I've read a few novels about the Sun King's court, but they all took place a bit later in his life, after Marie Mancini was out of the picture, so I knew nothing about this trailblazing young woman who captured a king's heart and made such an impression that her name appears in many letters and remembrances of her contemporaries.

The story begins with the death of Marie's mother, when a teenage Marie fully falls under the control of her powerful uncle, Cardinal Mazarin, and we are introduced to all of his nieces--the Mazarinettes, as they are called--and discover how he has used each one who has come of age to strengthen his position of power as top adviser to Louis XIV. Marie is perhaps the most clever and headstrong of all and vows to retain what little control she has over her life. But that doesn't come easy. When she catches the young king's eye and begins to spend time with him, she sees how completely her uncle and the king's mother are controlling his reign, and she determines to help the king realize his full potential on his own. Her desire to do so is admirable, and the author paints a picture of a woman who truly loves the king and wants to see him succeed in his own right, and it's just an added bonus that she gets to see her uncle fall in the process. But this strategy puts her at direct odds with her uncle, especially when the king decides to take a strong stance on the subject of his marriage and vows to marry Marie rather than one of the foreign princesses the cardinal is negotiating for.

And that's when everything starts to go downhill. As smart and daring as Marie is, she is no match for the most powerful man in France. She and Louis make a valiant effort, but the cardinal is always one step ahead of them. Nothing and no one is safe from his machinations as he uses anything he can to achieve his goals and bring down his niece. I cried right along with Marie as she finally realized her dreams of sharing a future with Louis as his wife were not going to come true. I don't know if it went down in history exactly as it does in this novel, but here it was heartbreaking. I wanted to kill the cardinal myself and shake some sense (and a backbone) into the king.

*Enchantress of Paris* is interesting in that it subscribes to the controversial assertion that Cardinal Mazarin was actually Louis XIV's father. I'm no expert on the subject, but it certainly does create a plausible explanation for the partnership between the cardinal and the queen mother and their rigorous control over the young king. There is a lot of focus here on court politics and the art of dressing to do battle in such an environment. This has caused other reviewers to label the novel as "fluffy," but given that one can draw

strong comparisons between the Mazarinettes and their family's struggle to hold sway over Louis XIV with the Boleyn/Howard family's quest to hold on to Henry VIII in England, I appreciated all of those dazzling details and the effort it took to hold one's own in such an environment. Parties, pageants, salons, and feasts are also depicted in sumptuous detail, making this novel a treat for the senses.

Everything was going along fine for me, aside from a little bit of a lag in pacing in the middle of the book, until I got to the epilogue. Many years have passed, and we learn through very brief mentions that Marie's adventures did not end when she left the Sun King. In fact, they were just beginning! I understand that the author chose to focus on Marie's life as it related to Louis XIV, but a true tribute to this remarkable woman should have allowed the reader to continue on with her as she became a star in the Italian court and truly took her destiny into her own hands. Coming in on the shorter side of historical fiction at 316 pages, there was certainly room for it. Chances are that if that epilogue had not teased me with juicy little details about that time in her life, I would not have felt the lack of them so keenly and lamented that I was missing out on a big part of Marie's story. But as Marie herself says in the epilogue, "That is a story for another day," so dare I hope for a sequel???

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### **Lígia Bellini says**

That was a great reading! I didn't expect to find the love story between King Louis XIV and Marie Mancini so sad! The Mazarinettes were puppets in the hands of their evil cousin, the Cardinal Mazarin. Besides control the King Louis for years, he did all the bad things he could, to make him richer and ruin his nieces and nephew's lives. It was thanks to Marie, that Louis learned to become a good king. But i still think, he wasn't brave! He took too long to bring a change during his reign. Seems the italian Queen Catherine de Medici, left her inheritance on France. I was surprised to learn how much, during King Louis XIV's reign, people were still so connected on occultism and poisons! Each Manzarinette had a "knowledge" about it, and it was thanks for this, that they could make their living! It was a very interesting reading!

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### **Julianne Douglas says**

Marci Jefferson's *ENCHANTRESS OF PARIS*, just released from Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press, addresses a glaring need in the panoply of historical fiction: novels set during the seventeenth century, and more specifically, in France. The French Revolution and two World Wars draw the lion's share of interest from authors and readers interested in France; huge swaths of fascinating history from earlier eras remain virtually untouched. Tapping into this treasure trove, Jefferson reanimates the personalities and intrigue of the court of Louis XIV, the Sun King. With an energetic, skillful flair, she examines the relationship between Marie Mancini, the defiant niece of the powerful Cardinal Mazarin, and young Louis, who wishes, despite all expectations, to marry her. Based on Marie's own memoirs, Jefferson's captivating novel sparkles like the diamonds that grace the beautiful Mazarinette's neck.

One of five daughters of Cardinal Mazarin's sister, Marie has spent most of her life secluded in convents in order to protect her family's political and social aspirations from the threat she embodies. Born under an evil star, she is predicted to disgrace her family in a way no woman had ever done before. Summoned to the palace bid farewell to her dying mother, Marie catches the eye of the serious young king, whose face mirrors her own loneliness. She wins Louis away from her sister Olympia, his current mistress, and by promising to bend the king to her uncle's will, gains her freedom from the convent. Marie's fierce love inspires Louis with a confidence he has never felt; she encourages him to escape his dependence on Mazarin and act as king in his own right. Disgusted by Mazarin's brazen abuse of power and threatened by his unrestrained hostility,

Marie searches for ways to thwart her uncle's designs. Mazarin's political hopes center on a peace treaty with Spain that requires Louis to marry the Spanish princess. Desperate to save her future, Marie searches for proof of the long-ago affair between Mazarin and the queen mother that resulted in Louis's birth, and turns to the very black arts that prophesied her downfall. Will her efforts assure her marriage to the king or force her to forsake him? Dare Louis ignore the needs of his nation to satisfy the desires of his heart?

Although at times the focus on the royal romance threatens to overwhelm the novel's plot, the intriguingly unfamiliar history and strong characterizations counter this danger. By examining the early years of Louis's reign, Jefferson humanizes a king who later came to epitomize the absolute monarch, revealing a tender vulnerability that succumbs to both Mazarin's control and Marie's influence. By embracing the possibility that Louis is in fact Mazarin's son, a theory recently suggested by historians, Jefferson provides a motivation for Mazarin's scheming and the means for his undoing. Finally, by casting Marie as a "Mazarinette," one of the bevy of sisters and cousins the Cardinal exploits to further his own schemes, Jefferson cleverly justifies Marie's audacious behavior. Nieces of an exceptional man, the Mazarinettes all exhibit extraordinary tendencies and lead unconventional lives. Marie's boldness, unusual in a young woman of that era, rings true in the context of her family and her upbringing. Forced to rely on no one but herself if she hopes to change her destiny, Marie inspires Louis to look within for the courage he needs to transform from obedient son to authentic king--and make her his bride in the process.

In the vein of 2014's *GIRL ON THE GOLD COIN* (several of whose characters make cameo appearances here), *ENCHANTRESS OF PARIS* spotlights a strong, spirited woman who rebels against those who would sacrifice her for their own gain, a woman who, determined to direct the course of her own life, stands to alter the course of a nation. Shining light into the darkest corners of the Sun King's glittering court, *ENCHANTRESS OF PARIS* examines whether love, grit and will can indeed revise what is written in the stars.

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## **Lesya says**

If you love sweeping historical novels featuring the kings and queens, you won't want to miss Marci Jefferson's latest novel, *Enchantress of Paris*. Marie Mancini might not be a household name, but the story of her love for Louis XIV, the Sun King, will break your heart.

Marie Mancini was the third of five beautiful Italian sisters, nieces of the powerful Cardinal Mazarin, who, along with the Queen Mother, governed France while King Louis was young. The Cardinal was the guardian for the young Louis XIV, and guided him in all political matters, while accumulating power and a vast fortune for himself. And, his five stunning nieces were tools to be wielded in his political maneuverings. First, Olympia, and then Marie were sent to enchant the king. What Mazarin didn't count on was the love that grew between King Louis XIV and Marie.

Marie was sent to a convent at an early age because her superstitious family believed a prophecy foretold by her father. "One day you will disgrace your family in ways no woman has ever done before." When her oldest sister died in childbirth, though, and Olympia married, Marie was the next choice to attend the court. Cardinal Mazarin had plans for the King, but Marie Mancini proved to be as manipulative as her powerful uncle.

As in her earlier novel, *Girl on the Golden Coin*, Jefferson brings to life a royal court of the seventeenth century in an atmospheric story. *Enchantress of Paris* is a powerful, character-driven historical novel. It's an emotionally intense novel of love and passion and politics. And, it's a surprising story of strong women, a group of sisters who married well, but found their own ways to live their lives despite loss. And, as

mentioned earlier, it will break your heart.

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### **Stephanie Thornton says**

Having read and loved Marci Jefferson's *Girl on a Golden Coin*, I eagerly awaited the tale of Marie Mancini in her latest novel, *The Enchantress of Paris*. The court of Louis XIV is rife with intriguing personalities like Cardinal Mazarin and the king's many mistresses, but I knew very little about Marie or her sisters. (And while none of the Manzini girls donned armor, they did remind me of GOT's Sand Snakes from Dorne!) What I loved most throughout the story was the Jefferson wasn't afraid to follow history and really break Marie's heart (and the reader's!) several times. For history buffs, this is a unique look at Louis XIV just as he's beginning to become the Sun King, moving out of the shadows of his mother and ministers, before Versailles, the red high heels, and towering wigs. (Although he does dance the ballet as Apollo, in true Louis fashion!)

P.S.- I also laughed aloud the reference to Frances Stuart (the heroine of *Girl on the Golden Coin*) toward the end! Definitely a fun "insider" joke!

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### **Margaret says**

France is not one of my regular stomping grounds, it's when my reading of English HF overlaps that I get my taste of the french. I am trying to change that and what better place then with Marci Jefferson's *Enchantress of Paris*. Having heard of the Sun King before but not knowing much background I looked forward to this book. I'll admit it was the cover that initially caught my eye - look at it, gorgeous, then the author. I've heard so many good things about her debut *Girl on the Golden Coin* but haven't read it yet. Since reading *Enchantress of Paris* that book has been moved closer to the top of my tbr pile. I had the privilege of meeting the author in Denver recently where we talked about this book (why didn't I take a pic?!).

The Mazarin's are also unknowns to me and I love that aspect of 'first time'. There are no preconceived notions, no likes or dislikes just an open mind taking everything in. It wasn't hard to like Marie, to dislike her uncle and be totally captivated with this book. Marie is strong willed, independent and clashes so much with the Cardinal who is the opposite, ruthless and just as strong willed, a rather powerful man.

Anything I've read about French kings has always been how they lack control of their future, how then bend to the wishes of others (this is where I think of the English kings who married whomever they wanted to, so why can't the french do that too?) Why couldn't Marie and the King would just run off and marry? The author does a great job of explaining the why and why not. Her knowledge of the time period is evident and also the amount of research that went into writing this book.

This wasn't just an entertaining read but an educational one as well. Highly recommend to those that like character driven stories and the French court.

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

4.5 stars. "*Enchantress of Paris*" is the latest historical fiction offering from Marci Jefferson. I really enjoyed her last book, "*Girl on the Golden Coin*," so I was excited to read this book. In this book, we see the court of

King Louis XIV of France, also known as the Sun King, through the eyes of one of his most beloved mistresses, Marie Mancini. Louis and Marie truly loved each other but it was a forbidden love with the King's mother and Marie's uncle trying to keep the lovers apart because of their own wants and more importantly, their own secrets!

This story is told from the perspective of Marie in first-person point of view. I really loved this because it allowed me to have a front seat to what it must've been like to be in France at the time. Marie and Louis fall hard for each other and it is a true love. Marie really doesn't seem to care that Louis is the king and Louis is ready to give up the throne for her if it means that they can be together. I had never really known much about Marie Mancini so I liked getting to know her through this book.

As the title suggests, there is an element of magic added to this book that I also really enjoyed. The author is able to weave in some magical realism details that really made this book sparkle for me. Marie comes from a line of family members who have been able to weave some enchantment through their lives and Marie also has that power. The element is subtle but really works for this book!

I also have to mention how much I enjoyed this setting. I've read a lot of historical fiction set in France but I haven't read too much about the Sun Kings Court. It was such an interesting time and Francis history and I really enjoyed getting to know it a little bit better through this book. Overall, the authors writing and the characters that she includes make this book a great pick for historical fiction lovers.

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## **Heather C says**

I was a HUGE fan of Marci Jefferson's first novel, *Girl on the Golden Coin*, and I could not wait to get my hands on *Enchantress of Paris*. I can tell you that I was not at all disappointed!

One of the aspects of *Golden Coin* that I loved was how Jefferson can create characters that pull at the heartstrings, and she doesn't miss that beat in *Enchantress* either! There were two or three moments when I had tears in my eyes. I had become invested in the characters and their relationships with each other and to see those relationships bend and break was painful. I think this is because the author crafts characters who are people that I could see standing in front of me and their actions and emotions are entirely believable. Despite the fact that they live in the 17th century, some things just don't change over time! I loved Marie Mancini – in Jefferson's hands she is passionate, charming, smart, and strong willed – someone I would love to be friends with. The relationships between the Mancini sisters were sometimes contentious and stormy, while at other times they pulled together for solidarity; sounds just like real sisters to me! I can honestly say that Cardinal Mazarin had pretty much no redeeming qualities; I was all too happy to see him go. And then there is King Louis – I loved him, while at the same time was angry and disappointed with him too.

There are SO many novels set in the royal courts of Europe, and the court of the Sun King is a frequent stop. For me this was a refreshing iteration. Some court novels can drag because of the confines of the life in the court, but *Enchantress* never encounters that problem. Marie's life takes her across France, Italy, and Spain and she is not always within the court – so she does have a little more freedom at times. There was always something exciting happening, whether it was court drama, Mancini family drama, or the elements of astrology and belief in magic. Even with all of this excitement, Jefferson balances that with excellent character building.

I could have read so much more about the Mancini's; those sisters certainly had their share of adventures and excitement. I hope that the author chooses to write more about their stories! Honestly, I would read anything Marci Jefferson writes.

This review was previously posted at The Maiden's Court blog and the book was received from the publisher for a review.

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