



Sphinx's Queen

Esther M. Friesner

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Ancient Egypt springs to life in this enthralling sequel to *Sphinx's Princess*. As she did in *Nobody's Princess* and *Nobody's Prize*, author Esther Friesner offers readers a fresh look at an iconic figure, blending historical fiction and mythology in a heady concoction.

Hunted . . . Overnight, every aspect of Nefertiti's life has changed. She is no longer living at the royal palace as the intended bride of the crown prince. Instead, she is being chased by the prince and his soldiers for a crime she did not commit.

Hidden . . . Traveling with two of her dearest friends, including the crown prince's brother, who helped her escape, Nefertiti takes shelter in the wild hills along the Nile's west bank. She must rely on her own resourcefulness and skills (all those secret archery lessons prove very useful) as the fugitives fight to survive.

Haunted . . . But the need for justice gnaws at Nefertiti. She is determined to plead her case to the Pharaoh and set things right. As she begins to question long-held sacred beliefs—a questioning that could alter the fabric of Egyptian society—her extraordinary journey from commoner to royalty brings adventure, intrigue, and romance.

Sphinx's Queen Details

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From Reader Review Sphinx's Queen for online ebook

Cris says

In some ways an improvement over *Sphinx's Princess* if only because there's a very limited number of characters for almost half of the book. However, the ending felt forced, overly simplistic and unconvincing. (Several characters undergo dramatic changes without any compelling narrative reason.) And after pretty much running minute-by-minute the plot starts jumping time by days/weeks/years in the last fifth or so of the book.

I guess I'm glad I finished *Sphinx's Queen*, but it feels more like a complete homework assignment than the satisfaction of finishing a well-told story. I doubt I'll try anything else YA by Friesner, but if you enjoyed *Sphinx's Princess* you should read *Sphinx's Queen*.

Monika says

After reading *Sphinx's Princess* I was very pleased to read this book. The first book was very good, but this one was even better. The story held my attention and I could hardly put it down. I would definitely recommend reading this if you are interested in Ancient Egypt. In addition to being a great story this book also provides a lot of interesting information about life in Ancient Egypt.

Irene says

Sphinx's Queen is the continuation of the book *Sphinx's Princess*. *Sphinx's Princess* is about a girl named Nefertiti. She was supposed to be the bride of the next pharaoh, Thutmose, but Thutmose wanted to take revenge on Nefertiti because Thutmose thought that Nefertiti liked his younger brother. Also, their wedding was postponed for three years due to the fact that Nefertiti's too young so Thutmose's spot as pharaoh is not secure. Now, Nefertiti must pay for a crime she did not commit, but before the punishment can be carried out, they need the pharaoh's agreement so she's being held inside a prison. Fortunately, the pharaoh is on a trip in Dendera. In *Sphinx's Queen*, Nefertiti escaped her prison with the help of her friends and sets off to Dendera with Thutmose's younger brother, Amenophis, and Nava, who once was a slave, but now, she is like a sister to Nefertiti. But before they reach Dendera, they will have to escape Thutmose and his soldiers and survive the whole way there. Even if they do get there in one piece, Nefertiti will still have to convince pharaoh that Thutmose, pharaoh's son, had framed her about committing a false crime.

The reason I picked this book up is because I liked the *Sphinx's Princess*. I enjoyed that book a lot so I wanted to give the next book a try as well. I also wanted to find out badly about what will happen to Nefertiti and how she will survive.

I finished this book because it was very interesting. Nefertiti's journey was fun and hilarious and it was hard to stop reading. I was determined to finish this book because I wanted to see what will happen to Nefertiti and Thutmose. It turns out that they became friends, which was really unexpected for me.

I would recommend this book to anybody who likes the book *Sphinx's Princess*. This is because the author's

writing style is similar and this book was as interesting as the first book. Nefertiti's adventure in this book was amusing.

Amber says

I loved this book. It makes me want to learn more about Nefertiti. It was very entertaining. It was also emotional.

Alejandra says

I loved his book!!!! I loved the ending and it was awesome!!!! I highly recommend it:)

Mara says

If you have read my review for Sphinx's Princess - this book's prequel - then you know that I enjoyed it, and looked forward to a similar experience while reading its sequel - Sphinx's Queen. For the most part, I was not disappointed. The characters - Nefertiti especially - are vibrant and full of life. Some of the dialogue was too modern for my taste - especially for an Egyptian-based story -, but it didn't detract from the story too much.

However, while the majority of Sphinx's Queen is every bit as intriguing and suspenseful as Sphinx's Princess, I was pretty disappointed with the ending. I will try to write this without giving anything away, but if you fear spoilers, read no further. I hate - absolutely hate it when characters reconcile with enemies. When a person is out for your blood and does everything he/she possibly can to ensure your death, the likelihood of that person to have a change of heart due to kind treatment is not high. I am not saying that it doesn't ever happen, but it is a rare occurrence - and in the case of Nefertiti and the two who do everything they can to destroy her and Amenophis have been doing similar things like that to have so full a reconciliation as they do. They start out as a full-fledged blood-feud - with the two setting Nefertiti up so they can kill her - and end up the best of buddies. Nefertiti's worst enemies suffer a complete attitude and personality-change. Sorry, but it doesn't work out that way, and when it does. no one wants a book to end like that.

So aside from the disappointing occurrence between Nefertiti and her enemies in the end, Sphinx's Queen is almost every bit as good as Sphinx's Princess, and if you are curious to see how things turn out (and if you have read Sphinx's Princess, I have little doubt that you are), you won't be too disappointed.

Lisa Ottone says

Frivolous but important details first: The cover. I love Nefertiti's dress and jewelry. She looks stunning...except what happened to her left arm? Just sayin' that kinda gives me a weird impression about the book.

But on to the book! Yes, I really liked this one. It was a wonderful follow-up to Sphinx's Princess, which was a great story but lacked drama and action. Sphinx's Queen makes up for the first book's shortfall as Nefertiti guides the reader on an adventure through the treacherous Nile and land of ancient Egypt. This book has a clearer purpose and more defined characters than the first; Nefertiti's perilous journey transforms her from an imploring young girl into a smart, headstrong young woman.

The gripes I do have about this book are mostly due to editing errors. I downloaded the iBooks version and towards the end, the book gets a little funny. There seems to be some gaps that appear, like a few pages here and there are missing. For example, in one paragraph Nefertiti is with her Aunt Tiye in her room, then the next paragraph it is suddenly a few weeks' time later with no flow through. In another chapter there is a passage indicating there is a conversation between Nefertiti and Thutmose taking place, but the writing is not organized so we know it's being spoken in the present or if Nefertiti is dreaming it up. A few pages are completely italicized and it's not clear when that part of the story is happening, so it threw me off a bit.

Fortunately, the book is still enthralling despite its errors. Although the solution to most of the character's problems seem blindingly obvious (Tiye, just let Nefertiti marry Amenophis! Let it go already!), the path that is taken is appropriate to what the true Nefertiti ultimately accomplishes. After reading up on some basic Egyptian mythology and history, Friesner's recreation fits quite nicely with what little is known about Nefertiti. It is colorful and imaginative and I'm looking forward to reading more of her historical fiction.

<http://emeraldsandempresses.blogspot....>

Victoria Shuler says

I must admit, I was slightly wary of this book in the beginning. I don't tend to read many of the books aimed at girls my age because, despite a seemingly intriguing plotline, they usually degenerate into sappy romances, which I deplore. This, however, was different. It was a romance, yes, but it was about so much more than that! It was about Nefertiti and her growth from a girl running away from her life to a woman strong enough to stand her ground and face it.

One of the best aspects of this book, in my opinion, is the characters. There is such a wide cast, and I grew to love all of them in the end, even Thutmose, who began as the most annoying, spoiled brat. There's Nava, the Jewish slave, who often testifies her faith in the One, Amenophis, who is sweet and gentle and wise, Sitamun, who, like her mother, Queen Tiye, is a strong, persistent woman, and of course, Nefertiti herself, a girl who is beautiful, intelligent, and courageous enough to stand up for herself even when Pharaoh, the god-on-earth, is doubtful of her word and her aunt would destroy her at the first opportunity.

Nefertiti's journey throughout the book is one of danger and excitement, love and loneliness, doubt and victory, revenge and forgiveness. She's a remarkable character, and the love of her circle of friends is her greatest source of strength.

Then there was the story...I laughed and I cried, and the author even managed to coax a gasp out of me at parts. I was hooked, and for the most part, didn't put the book down until I had finished it. I loved the history, the setting of ancient Egypt, and the little bit of mythology thrown in there.

It was a great read, and definitely one that I would recommend!

Lisa says

This book just annoyed me, a lot, and I resorted to skimming in order to finish the book without throwing my iPod through the wall.

The modern language continued to grate, but at least there wasn't another "fur-covered cheese ball" moment. The plot is more fast moving, but there are subplots that feel like they've been thrown in to pad the story out.

The "Nefertiti is *not* just a pretty face" angle is drummed into us so much that she comes off as a Mary Sue. The other "good guys" are flat and bland. The relationship between Nefertiti and Amenophis comes off more as friends than lovers. A few characters perform complete 180 degree turnabout just so we can have a happy, non-dramatic ending.

The villainy of Thutmose and Tiye is really over the top and not at all well thought out. For example, (view spoiler) Tiye is slightly better but I just wanted to bonk them both on the head.

The historical information that this book uses is so old, inaccurate and fringe theory that I really thought the book wasn't recently published, when it was only 2 years ago. I had really hoped that Friesner wouldn't use the Aten = the God of the Hebrews angle, but she did so *bangs head on desk*

I'm really not the audience this book is intended for, and I'm the exactly the type of person that this book would annoy. Other people have loved the book, so if you're curious, I suggest you read it for yourself.

Andrea says

plot spoilers

This book was very juvenile, definitely for a younger audience than me. The way they talked was childish and exhausting to read. Everyone used way too much emotion when speaking; words were italicized and emphasized that didn't need to be, and there were exclamation points at the end of nearly every sentence. "Now see what you've done to me, Nefertiti! If you had been a normal girl, you would have *jumped* at the chance to marry me, not delay and delay and *delay*. You made me wait--*me*, the next pharaoh, the god-on-earth! Father would have named me coruler long ago if you'd married me when you were supposed to instead of wasting time with my brother, that ugly, stammering bundle of sticks and stupidity!"

"It's one thing to get that little boat across the sacred river, but to steer it for *days*? I don't know if I can do it, and now I *must*.

"What good was it to break you out of your prison if Thutmose recaptures you because I wasn't smart enough or strong enough to *keep* you out of his hands?"

A lot of the talking and phrases aren't historically accurate. It just did not sound like they were in ancient Egypt at all.

There was a bold quality to his to hops and flutters that made it seem as if he were swaggering, telling the whole world, "Oh yes, this is a fine crocodile, isn't it? One of the biggest, the strongest, the best hunters. And he works for me."

Need I say more?

We've got Amenophis stumbling and stuttering over his words all the time.

"Y—yes. I mean I'm not sure about that either."

"None for me, please. I'm . . . I'm not hungry."

"I—I guess you're right. The gods forbids it, but—but it *would* tangle your legs and drag you down."

Omg, did you realize how everyone was talking?! They were over-emphasizing everything! Jeeze, read it back and see how annoying that is.

"For all you know, your sister Sitamun has covered our tracks for us. She's a very smart woman. Think about it: Thutmose discovers that we're gone and starts raging through the palace, demanding to know who's responsible for our escape. I wouldn't put it past Sitamun to act guilty on purpose, just so he'd turn on her and demand a confession. Oh, she would pretend to know nothing about it, but she'd pretend badly, until finally she'd made a great show of breaking down and telling him that we ran away *up* the river or that we didn't even sail away at all, but took a chariot and—"

Omg, this girl is so STUPID! That's the kind of sentences that are in here. Childish, rambling crap that goes on and on and makes you feel stupid just by reading it.

There are a lot of stupid schemes like that in this duet. The characters over-explain things until you feel like they're speaking to a 5 year old who's hard of understanding. The plots and schemes they come up with are so lame.

The book was just poorly written, plain and simple. Descriptions, conversations, everything was weak.

There were scenes that tried to be romantic, I'm sure, but failed miserably. It might just be the worst attempts at love I've ever witnessed.

"I *was* afraid," I said. "Afraid something had happened to you. I couldn't stand the thought of it, especially so soon after we found one another again."

He lowered his head. "I'm honored that you care about me so much. I've never had such a—such a friend before."

Is that all we are to one another? I thought. *Is that all* But I had no answer to my own question, only a strange feeling that danced away from me whenever I tried to give it a name.

"Don't speak about Amenophis that way!" I snapped back. "He's your closest kin."

An ugly smile stole over Thutmose's face. "And what is he to *You*?"

I pressed my lips together and gave him a hard look. "He's my friend," I said stiffly.

"Really?" The crown prince's sneer grew ever repulsive by the moment. "Nothing more? Nothing. . . closer than that?"

"*My friend*," I maintained. "Maybe if you'd tried to be my friend—my true friend—no one could have had to force me to marry you."

"He's *not* ugly." I leaped to Amenophis's defense so hotly that it made Idu snicker.

"And he's *not* just a friend to you, either, is he?"

There's a very brief suggestion, and then we're moving on. We don't get her thoughts or feelings on the matter, just the mention of them being friends and then it's over.

“Rrrrr?”

The musical rumbling of an inquisitive purr took me by surprise.

A cat with a questioning purr. I don’t even know what to say.

“And I would never abandon him. Never! Alive *or* dead.”

The momentary glimpse of a kinder, more human Thutmose vanished. “It’s true, then. You love him. You insulted me, cast me aside, refused to help secure my path to Father’s throne, and all because you love him.” I could have denied it. The words *he’s only my friend and nothing more* were halfway to my lips. I could have spoken them. I’d said them before, so easily, so simply. For the first time, I couldn’t.

I looked Thutmose in his hate-filled, hurt-filled eyes and said, “Yes, I love Amenophis. With all my heart, I do.”

Seriously? All that’s happened is people asking if they’re friends, when there really wasn’t even a reason to ask that question, and there have been no feelings on her end whatsoever, and *all of a sudden* you’re throwing out the L word?

“You probably would have eaten the *honey* instead of bringing it to my brother.”

First off, why in the world you italicize the word *honey*? Second, why would he even say that? This kid just goes off on tangents and I don’t know why he says the stuff he does.

“Ah, a word at last!” Thutmose snickered. “I was afraid that you’d wandered into the savage Red Lands and the vultures ate your tongue. Is that what happened to Amenophis? Is that why you won’t talk about him? He’s dead. The fool risked his life to save yours and lost his own. What an idiot! And now you think you’ll dodge the blame for his death by refusing to talk about it. You’d abandon his unburied body like a mongrel dog’s, starve his souls, deny him his place in the afterlife, just so you can—”

Whoa, whoa, slow down. What the heck is he going on about?

“Thutmose believes there’s nothing he *has* to do except have his own way in everything,” I countered. “He’ll find some excuse to continue the hunt, and if he has you” I closed my eyes— “He has me.”

“What are you say—”

And then Nava interrupts.

Rrrr. Was that the cat’s way of telling us she agreed with the child?

Murr. Ta-Miu wound her sleek body around my ankles in the dark.

What cat makes noises that like?

“Amenophis . . .” I turned my head so that there was only a fingertip’s breadth between our faces.

“Amenophis, I—I feel—” Why couldn’t I tell him the words that had come to my lips so readily when I spoke to Thutmose. *I love Amenophis. With all my heart, I do.*

He had been the awkward one when we’d first met, but now it was my turn to be gawky, clumsy, tripping over my words the way he used to trip over his own feet.

There’s another moment, and then something happens, usually Nava interrupts. So annoying!

The scene where she sneaks into Thutmose’s tent and threatened him was probably the best scene in the

entire book. She showed strength and determination, and I liked when she made him drink the liquid that would put him to sleep. I also liked the part where she finally spilled her feelings.

“Ah, so you’ve uncovered my scheme to distract you. Now I’ll have to eat mice after all. Don’t forget to skin them first. We can use the hides to make you a nice pair of sandals.”

I laughed. “You always know how to cheer me, Amenophis. No wonder I love you.”

“What?” His startled question echoed in the cave.

Oh, gods, how had *that* slipped out of my mouth? I wasn’t ready to say such things to him, not yet! Not yet! And then she rambles on and on to distract him. It was a cute scene. I also liked when she came up with the plot to save Samut’s son:

We sat together with our backs pressed against the passageway wall and spoke in whispers when we spoke at all. We were too tense to exchange more than a few words, mostly small, nervous questions: Was I comfortable, was his foot bothering him, was that the sound of rocks falling or just our imaginations? When we actually heard Kawit’s signal, the handful of pebbles she dropped to alert us to Samut’s approach, it sounded as loud as if a monumental temple pillar had toppled to the ground.

He planted a clumsy kiss on my cheek and then made a disgusted sound when he tasted the paint on my face. When we caught up to him again, I was breathing hard and sweat was pouring down my face, my back, and my legs. “Slow down, for the love of Isis, I said, shifting to Ta-Mui’s basket to my other hip. “We almost lost you at least five times.”

Sadly, these slightly funny/enjoyable moments didn’t last long. There was another stupid part where the grave robbers talked on and on very stupidly and their lame scheme worked a little good.

I couldn’t believe that even after she loved him she was calling him homely. How do you love someone you think is homely? And the words bony, gangly, and gawky should not be used for the love interest in a book. Then a few pages after she said he had a homely face she tells him he’s handsome. I’m a little confused.

I always like a book where they don’t get with the handsome, conceited guy, but are more down to earth and like the less handsome, nicer guy. But when you describe someone with the physique of Amenophis, with his long limbs, gangly body, big head and long face with thick lips and small eyes, that makes him sound emaciated and just too ugly and I don’t go for it. Could you have made him any more undesirable? I’m wondering why Nefertiti even likes him at all.

Their romance was so boring. She’d kiss him softly, he’d kiss her, she’d hug him, and that was about the most of it. And he was calling her his beloved and it was just all so cheesy.

Everybody just goes on these long speeches every time they open their mouths, speeches that last like half a page.

She’s so gullible and she always falls into everyone’s traps. She says stuff she shouldn’t and gives people leverage to use against her. Then there’s the race between her and Thutmose and the dilemma with her dress that goes on for almost three pages. Oh. My. God. Someone put me out of my misery already.

“You’re doing better than I expected, little *gazelle*!” he called out. “Too bad your hooves are tied, or else you might have had a hope of beating me. What luck that hounds are smarter than their prey! Ah well, cheer up. You can teach our sons how to run.”

What? I just don’t get it. The hooves being tied, him saying she can teach their sons how to run...why would

he even say that? She isn't running well at all, so he's saying she can teach their sons to run badly? And hooves being tied? That reference doesn't make one ounce of sense.

It's just all so stupid and I feel as if my IQ has dropped since reading this.

Then was a few conflicts there at the end that were easily and quickly resolved. Thutmose just all of a sudden turned nice, and it was like he did a complete 360 in the matter of a day, and I was like what? Nothing had even happened to make him be nice to them, and yet he was suddenly laughing and having a good time. You don't introduce a bad character that's trying to kill people and treating his brother like crap and then just make him nice at the end, I guess so everyone will think kindly of him and have fond memories since she killed him off.

Then Bit-Bit is distant towards her, and that lasts for a little while before it's suddenly cleared up in time for the wedding.

Kimberly says

I am so glad that I finally gave this series a try. Back in December I finally got around to reading and reviewing the first novel and this one turned out to be my second read of 2013 and it really kicked off the year for me.

This book continues exactly where the first book Sphinx's Princess left off, and I mean exactly, the two novels flowed seamlessly from the first book to the second which I really appreciated because it sucks to have to pick a story back up again when the author has lost the flow.

Anyway, in book two we find Nefertiti still running for her life and battling the feelings she has for her fiance's brother as well as the responsibilities to a young slave girl who depends on the two of them for her very survival. Ancient Egypt was no place for a nine year old to be running around lost and alone so Nefertiti and Amenophis try to hide their feelings for each other for her sake.

The journey that they're on proves to be hazardous and fraught with danger, deception, betrayal, love and adventure. I loved that there was so much happening in the book and that the whole novel was a delight to read. I really enjoyed the historical aspect of it since I've always enjoyed Ancient Egyptian history.

Sphinx's Queen was an exotic, entertaining and extremely well developed piece of young adult historical fiction. I thought the characters had a lot more dimension to them than they did in the first book. Nefertiti and Amenophis' relationship evolves dramatically in this book and both of them mature rather quickly in terms of their characters.

What I think I liked most about the book though was the fact that Nefertiti was represented as a strong willed, independent and intelligent young woman who would risk anything for justice to be upheld. I don't see that very often in books but it is wonderful when I come across a book where the author shows that young women can stand on their own two feet.

The characters, plot and writing were fantastic and I loved Sphinx's Queen even more than I loved Sphinx's Princess which I wasn't expecting at all. I really enjoyed how the events in this one turned out and the ending

was just perfect for me. It left me feeling the the two books came full circle and left me feeling satisfied with the outcome.

I would highly recommend this novel to those who really enjoy young adult historical fiction but remember this is the second book and you have to read the first book to really follow along the story. I think this author will go on my favourites list and I can't wait to read her other works.

Danica Page (One Page at a Time) says

Esther Frienser doesn't fail too disappoint. She weaves the final book in this series masterfully and creates characters that readers fall in love with.

This finale to the series was definitely a triumph.

A great read for anybody who likes historical fiction.

Elizabeth says

Absolutley awesome!!! the ending is a bit sad, but happy at the same time, which i think is how all books shoudl end-- et just makes them so more likable!!

READ THESE BOOKS!!!

Julia Y says

I read this a few weeks after reading the first book in this 2-book series. (You can see my review of the first book, The Sphinx's Princess right [HERE](#). Unfortunately, I didn't like this book nearly as much as the first.

This book picks up where The Sphinx's Princess left off. Nefertiti has escaped Thutmose with Amenophis and Nava and is traveling along the Nile. Throughout the first half of the book they travel from place to place, receiving help and helping others. They run into Thutmose. They travel to the Pharaoh. The second half of the book seems almost like a separate story, although one much closer to that of the Sphinx's Princess. This half of the story is filled with the plotting and politics of court life.

The plot and story lines of this novel were great, but problems lay in the characters. Nefertiti is much the same character as she was in the Sphinx's Princess, however in this novel she seems a little too perfect and flawless. At one point she gets mistaken her a goddess. In another scene she escapes Thutmose's camp a by herself. She makes few, if any mistakes. On top of being incredibly beautiful, she is kind, good, and smart. She's pretty much a Mary Sue.

The other characters lack depth. The villains lack true motivation for their villainous deeds, and (view spoiler)

Despite this, it was an OK book. I liked the historical aspects of it. The settings were well described and

vibrant. It was enjoyable. Also, it wrapped up the series pretty well. For these reasons, I plan on reading any other books this author comes out with.

Rating: 8/10

Characters: 4/10

Premise: 9/10

Enjoyment: 8/10

Plot: 10/10

Writing: 9/10

Russell Hall says

Nefertiti can be as tantalizing and mysterious as the Mona Lisa, and like her European Cousin, the real Nefertiti is still smiling and holding on to her secrets. Esther Friesner imagines what the young Nefertiti may have been like in this novel. Although a bit unrealistic, it still provides a good trip of imagination into what this imposing personality may have actually been like as a child and young woman.
