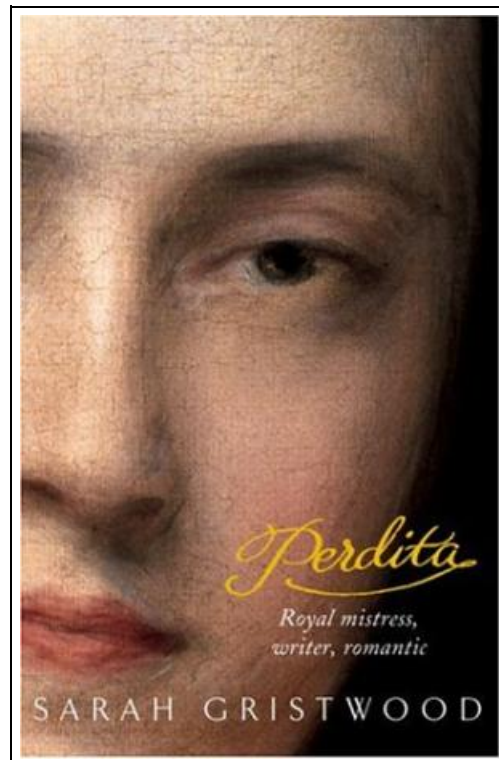


Perdita (Hardback)



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Reviews

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PERDITA (HARDBACK)



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Transworld Publishers Ltd, United Kingdom, 2005. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: N/A. Brand New Book. Few women s lives have described such an arc as that of Mary Robinson - or Perdita, as she was widely known. She began her career as an actress, royal mistress and possible blackmailer, and ended it just two decades later as a Romantic poet and early feminist thinker of note. She was the subject of paintings by Gainsborough and Reynolds, and of a hundred political cartoons. Variouslly portrayed as a wounded innocent and a harlot, she deliberately chose, in her later career, to make a political issue of her sexuality. Born in 1758 in the shadow of Bristol cathedral, she married at fifteen - one Thomas Robinson, an articulated clerk of seemingly good family. But Mary had barely made her curtsy to society before discovering that Robinson was little better than a conman. As things grew worse, she followed her husband into debtors prison, where she wrote her first book of poems. Encouraged by Sheridan and Garrick, who admired her beauty, she went on the stage, and over the next four years appeared in nearly forty plays before being cast as Perdita in A Winter s Tale. The performance was witnessed by the 17-year-old Prince of Wales, and they embarked on a widely satirized liaison that saw the prince offering to pay Mary #20,000 when he came of age. Mary had made her mark in fashionable Georgian high society and this, over the next two momentous decades, was where she contrived to stay. Mary s brief life saw a radical change in western society. Born at a time when women dressed their hair with powder and wore stiff brocade over whalebone, she died when simple muslin shifts clad women in comparative nudity; a sea change...



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