



The Million Dollar Mermaid: An Autobiography

Digby Diehl, Esther Williams

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Not since David Niven wrote the bestselling *The Moon's a Balloon* and its sequel *Bring on the Empty Horses* has one of Hollywood's great stars written with such genuine wit and candor about

* what it was like to work in the movie factories where actors were pampered and coddled, yet expected to work without complaint for long, hard hours

* what it was like to be young and sexy and to be turned into an object of desire for millions of moviegoers

* what it was like to live in a world of almost total unreality, yet be expected to go about the business of finding a mate and raising a family, and avoiding personal scandal at all costs.

Now, for the hundreds of thousands of people who read and loved both of Niven's books, comes Esther Williams's wonderfully witty, fresh, and frank autobiography, all about an eighteen-year-old girl who reluctantly answers the siren call of MGM -- at the time, the most powerful and prestigious movie studio in the world -- and who soon finds herself launched on a career that will last more than twenty years, during which time she will help to create a genre of film that seems almost unimaginable today, yet which still holds all its original freshness and fascination, and who becomes during those years one of the world's top box office stars.

Williams calls MGM her "university," and the education she got there was one in how to project glamour and femininity, how to make yourself desirable while always, always playing the lady. No one who were through that university has ever written before with such absolute candor about what it was really like -- the affairs, the gossip, the tricks of the trade, the competition, the deals, the fights, and the methods the studios had for keeping their stars in line.

With a sharp mind and a rapier wit, Esther Williams brings to life those times and those bigger-than-life people, telling her stories with respect, yet with clear-eyed candor. Filled with behind-the-scenes gossip and tales of real life in a fantasy world, *The Million Dollar Mermaid* is the book legions of film fans have been waiting for.

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