

People ELIZABETH TAYLOR

1932-2011

She was a sensation in *National Velvet* at the age of 12, with her gorgeous violet eyes and porcelain skin. As she blossomed through her teens, Elizabeth Taylor transformed herself into the "Most Beautiful Woman in the World." As the international icon once noted, "I can't remember a day when I wasn't famous." How will we remember her? Certainly for her movies, where she lit up the screen in *A Place in the Sun* with Montgomery Clift or as Rock Hudson's young wife in *Giant* or as Maggie to Paul Newman's Brick in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Nominated five times for Academy Awards as Best Actress, Taylor won twice, for *Butterfield 8* and for her braying Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Her love affairs captivated the world as much as her movies. Married eight times to seven men, including a hotel heir, a singer and a senator, she considered impresario Mike Todd, who died in a plane crash, her great love. That is, until she fell for married *Cleopatra* co-star Richard Burton, setting off a global scandal and prompting the Vatican to denounce her as an "emotional vagrant." Husbands would come and go, but diamonds were this girl's best friend. She had one of the world's great private collections, including the 69.42-carat diamond ring from Richard Burton and the famous La Peregina pearl, which had once belonged to Mary Tudor of England. In a book celebrating their beauty, she wrote: "As I look at some of my jewels, I realize what a very lucky girl I am." In her later years, Taylor doted on her four children and many grandchildren. She reinvented herself as a businesswoman, creating fragrances such as Passion and White Diamonds. And she was the first big celebrity to raise millions for AIDS, a disease that had killed close friends Rock Hudson and fashion designer Halston. She was loved and honored by many, including Queen Elizabeth, who made her a Dame of the British Empire. Elizabeth Taylor was a queen of her own invention, a legend in her own time.

TRADE HARDCOVER

Category: Biography

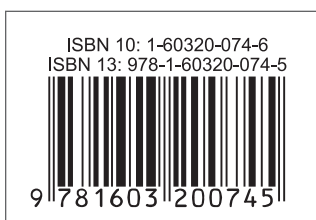
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