

Meg Cabot

The author and her work



Meg Cabot is probably best known as the author of *The Princess Diaries*. This series of books for younger readers has been very successful in many countries, and five volumes have been published so far. There will probably be more.

But *The Princess Diaries* are not the only books which Meg has written. She has published more than thirty titles, some of which are for adults. She has used three different names as a writer, but now all present editions of her books have her own name on them.

Meg Cabot was born on February 1st, 1968, in Bloomington, Indiana. Indiana is a state in the east-central part of the USA. Meg, who has two younger brothers, loved listening to, and reading, stories from an early age. She also spent a lot of time in her town's public library.

Soon, Meg wanted to write herself, but her mother didn't think that writing was a good way to earn money. So Meg learned to type – a useful skill for a writer! She also became interested in drawing and painting.

When she left high school, Meg studied for a degree in Fine Art at Indiana University. After she graduated, she moved to New York city. She hoped to get a job as an illustrator but she couldn't find enough illustration work.

Instead, Meg took a job as a manager at a student dormitory. It was here that she started to use her spare time to write seriously. Her first book was a historical, romantic novel called *Where Roses Grow Wild*. This was published in 1998.

The first book in *The Princess Diaries* series was published in 2000. There has been a new volume every year since then. *The Princess Diaries* are about Mia, a rather 'difficult' 16-year-old, who loves New York.

Mia is horrified to find out that her father is the ruler of a (fictional) small European country called Genovia and that she will have to take over his job. So Mia, who is really Princess Amelia Mignonette Grimaldi Thermopolis Renaldo, has to learn to be a real princess. Her teacher for these 'princess lessons' is her grandmother. This is not what Mia wants at all, but life has to go on and the diaries record her frustrations and delights.

Meg says that she had the first ideas for *The Princess Diaries* when, after her father's death, her mother became very friendly with one of Meg's teachers. She used this experience as part of the story and she also used ideas from her own schoolgirl diaries. Reading these diaries now makes her blush, but they are good material for a writer of stories for teenagers.

Besides *The Princess Diaries*, Meg Cabot has published the *Mediator* series. Six volumes of this have appeared so far. Meg has also written books for young adults and a number of adult historical romances. The Disney company has made two films based on the characters from *The Princess Diaries* series.

Meg now lives – with her husband and her cat – in homes in New York and in Florida.

A selection of works by Meg Cabot

- (2000) *The Princess Diaries*
- (2000) *The Princess Diaries: Take Two*
- (2001) *The Princess Diaries: Third Time Lucky*
- (2002) *The Princess Diaries: Mia Goes Forth*
- (2003) *The Princess Diaries: Give Me Five*

The first two stories about Princess Mia were made into the movie *The Princess Diaries* (Buena Vista/Walt Disney Pictures, 2001).

(For a list of Meg Cabot's stories that have been simplified for the Macmillan Readers Series, see a copy of the current Readers catalogue.)