



Aphrodite: Ancient Manners

Louys, Pierre

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Aphrodite

by Pierre Louys

The Drums of War takes place in Alexandria in the 1st Century BC where Demetrios, a renowned artist falls in love with a courtesan, Chrysis. She asks him to prove his love to her by committing three crimes and Demetrios agrees.

"On the heels of Bilitis, Pierre Louys published his first novel, Aphrodite (Moeurs Antiques) in 1896. It was a bestseller, selling 350,000 copies, sealing Louys' reputation as a popular author of erotic literature.

Set in Ptolemaic Alexandria, at a much later date than Bilitis, Aphrodite is as much a love story as a crime story. Louys' decadent, sensual vision of Egypt in classical times is a jeweled setting for a story of transgressive love. The sculptor Demetrios, the favorite of Queen Berenice, falls for a well-to-do courtesan, Chrysis. Much of the story is set in the world of the courtesans, a realm of beauty, luxury, sapphic indulgence, and some dark shadows as well. "

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