



The Road from Versailles: Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, and the Fall of the French Monarchy

Munro Price

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What becomes of leaders when absolute power is wrested from their hands? How does dramatic political change affect once-absolute monarchs? In acclaimed historian Munro Price's powerful new book, he confronts one of the enduring mysteries of the French Revolution---what were the true actions and feelings of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette as they watched their sovereignty collapse?

Dragged back from Versailles to Paris by the crowd in October 1789, the king and queen became prisoners in the capital. They were compelled for their own safety to approve the Revolution and its agenda. Yet, in deep secrecy, they soon began to develop a very different, and dangerous, strategy. The precautions they took against discovery, and the bloody overthrow of the monarchy three years later, dispersed or obliterated most of the clues to their real policy. Much of this evidence has until now remained unknown.

The Road from Versailles reconstructs in detail, for the first time, the king and queen's clandestine diplomacy from 1789 until their executions. To do so, it focuses on a vital but previously ignored figure, the royal couple's confidant, the baron de Breteuil. Exiled from France by the Revolution, Breteuil became their secret prime minister, and confidential emissary to the courts of Europe.

Along with the queen's probable lover, the comte de Fersen, it was Breteuil who organized the royal family's dramatic dash for freedom, the flight to Varennes. Breteuil's role is crucial to an understanding of what Louis and Marie Antoinette secretly felt and thought during the Revolution. To unlock these secrets, *The Road from Versailles* draws on highly important unpublished and previously unknown material.

Meticulously researched and utterly fascinating, *The Road from Versailles* provides fresh insight into some of the most controversial events in modern history.

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