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Sommario/riassunto	The foremost woman artist of her age, Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun (1755-1842) exerted her considerable charm to become the friend, and then official portraitist, of Marie Antoinette. Though profitable, this role made Vigée Le Brun a public and controversial figure, and in 1789 it precipitated her exile. In a Europe torn by strife and revolution, she nevertheless managed to thrive as an independent, self-supporting artist, doggedly setting up studios in Rome, Naples, Venice, Milan, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and London. Long overlooked or dismissed, Vigée Le Brun's portraits now hang in the Louvre, in a room of their own, as well as in all leading art museums of the world. This gripping biography tells the story of a singularly gifted and high-spirited woman during the revolutionary era and explores the development and

significance of her art. The book also recounts the public and private lives of Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun, connecting her with such personalities of her age as Catherine the Great, Napoleon, and Benjamin Franklin, and setting her experiences in the context of contemporary European politics and culture. A generous selection of illustrations, including sixteen of Vigée Le Brun's portraits presented in full color, completes this exceptional volume.
