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Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- List of Illustrations and Maps -- Preface -- 1. A Dark and Difficult Childhood -- 2. Youth on the Throne -- 3. The Bright Beginning, 1774-76 -- 4. Drift Towards War, 1776-78 -- 5. American Liberty and Royal Debt, 1778-82 -- 6. The Embarrassments of Peace, 1783-85 -- 7. Unravelling, 1785-86 -- 8. Royal Revolution: The Assembly of Notables of 1787 -- 9. The Road to the Estates-General, May 1787-May 1789 -- 10. The Silent King and the Third Estate -- 11. The Invasion of a Palace -- 12. The Revolution Caricatures Itself, October 1789-June 1791 -- 13. The Flight to Montmédy -- 14. Playing by the Book of the Constitution, 13 September 1791- 10 August 1792 -- 15. The Prisoner in the Temple -- Genealogies -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	A thought-provoking, authoritative biography of one of history's most maligned rulers Louis XVI of France, who was guillotined in 1793 during the Revolution and Reign of Terror, is commonly portrayed in fiction and film either as a weak and stupid despot in thrall to his beautiful, shallow wife, Marie Antoinette, or as a cruel and treasonous tyrant. Historian John Hardman disputes both these versions in a fascinating new biography of the ill-fated monarch. Based in part on new scholarship that has emerged over the past two decades,

Hardman's illuminating study describes a highly educated ruler who, though indecisive, possessed sharp political insight and a talent for foreign policy; who often saw the dangers ahead but could not or would not prevent them; and whose great misfortune was to be caught in the violent center of a major turning point in history. Hardman's dramatic reassessment of the reign of Louis XVI sheds a bold new light on the man, his actions, his world, and his policies, including the king's support for America's War of Independence, the intricate workings of his court, the disastrous Diamond Necklace Affair, and Louis's famous dash to Varennes.
