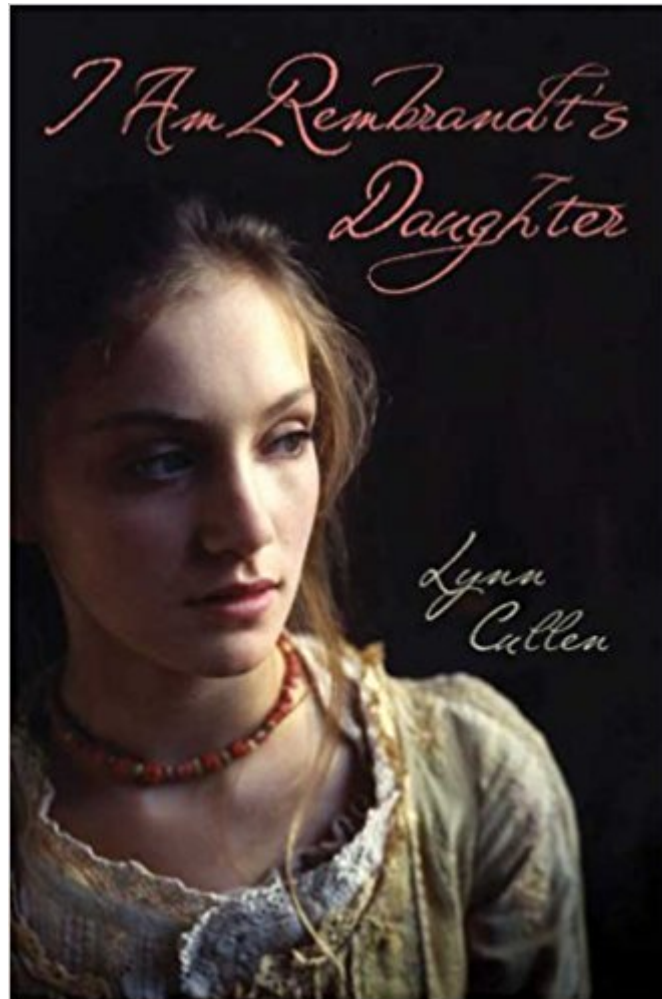




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# I Am Rembrandt's Daughter



## Synopsis

With her mother dead of the plague and her brother newly married, Cornelia van Rijn finds herself without a friend or confidante—except her difficult father. Out of favor with Amsterdam's elite, the once revered Rembrandt van Rijn is now teetering on the brink of madness. Cornelia alone must care for him, though she is haunted by secrets and scandal of her own. Her only happiness comes in a growing romance with Carel, the son of a wealthy shipping magnate, whose passion for art stirs her. And then there is Neel, her father's last remaining pupil, a darkly brooding young man whose steadfast devotion to Rembrandt both baffles and touches her. Based on real characters and filled with family dramas and a love triangle that would make Jane Austen proud, *I Am Rembrandt's Daughter* is a powerful account of a young woman's struggle to come of age within the shadow of one of the world's most brilliant and complicated artists.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

**\*Starred Review\*** After her mother dies and her beloved brother moves away, 14-year-old Cornelia is left alone with her father, Rembrandt van Rijn, who works in poverty after wealthy patrons denounce him. Growing up "in the shadow of Vader's instability," Cornelia craves convention; she reads books such as *Maidenly Virtues* to learn proper comportment for young women. Then she develops a warm friendship with handsome Carel, heir to a shipping fortune, and she imagines a future of wealth, decorum, and the outspoken love she rarely feels at home. Many authors have

imagined the lives of famous artists from a child's viewpoint. Cullen's novel is noteworthy for its emotional depth and sensitive development of characters. Readers will learn about Rembrandt and his art--his radical painting style, his belief that God directed his brush. Around these facts, Cullen creates a powerful family drama, fleshing out father and daughter into whole, heartbreaking individuals whose inner lives are glimpsed with acute sensitivity. Flashback chapters, which heavily foreshadow a shocking family secret, feel somewhat disjointed, and the ties to artwork seem forced. Readers will overlook any bumps in the narrative and sink into this absorbing, romantic story of a teen who upends her worldview and, in doing so, grows into herself. An author's note, character list, and notes about paintings mentioned in the text are appended. Gillian EngbergCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

LYNN CULLEN is the author of several novels and picture books, including *Moi* and *Marie Antoinette*. She lives in Atlanta, Georgia.[www.lynncullen.com](http://www.lynncullen.com)

This book is an example of why I am a hypocrite. Really, and here's why. I write reviews and I constantly tell people how important they are, but then I read a book like this, disagree with many of the other reviews and shake my head at people. In other words, I disregard everything I read and come to my own conclusion. Now about the book: I fell in love with this book just as assuredly as I fell in love with the last book I read by Lynn Cullen (*Mrs. Poe*.) I believe this book was marketed as a young adult read, but I felt it had much more depth than one usually finds in that category, so if the YA books tend to turn your head away, please give this one a second look anyway. Cornelia is a beautiful, strong and capable character. She has the wit and intellect to handle such a strong role as being Rembrandt's daughter. Lynn Cullen has a way of letting the reader inside the minds of her characters so that they can experience their emotions and see through their eyes. She makes you feel like you are part of the ongoing story rather than just a bystander. I felt that way with this story. I love when you read something and you just know that it must have been important to the author at the time that they wrote it. This book has some absolutely beautiful passages that support a strong story that gets stronger as the book progresses. I enjoyed watching the characters mature and grow throughout the telling. The struggle of Cornelia loving her father even through shame, humiliation and ridicule from others was incredibly well written. I felt sympathy toward her and her situation and by the end of the book, I only wanted what was best for her. The secondary characters in this story are also well penned and help to shed light on Cornelia's character and determination. I loved the

setting and the historical research the author did was clearly more than adequate. This book is beautiful, and I would certainly recommend it to anyone interested in the historical period.

Through the early chapters of *I AM REMBRANDT'S DAUGHTER*, I felt a bit disappointed, as the writing seemed rather simplistic and apparently aimed at a young adult audience. But as the characters evolved and the sense of being right there in 17th Amsterdam blossomed, I became entranced and couldn't put it down. This book was clearly carefully researched, and it was interesting to subsequently learn that the story and the "cast of characters" are almost entirely factual. Cornelia is such a strong, multi-faceted child/young woman, and the detail with which Rembrandt himself is drawn was fascinating. As a reader, I felt as if I crawled inside their world and got to know them. I also learned a great deal more about the Plague, with which I have long been intrigued. If you are a fan of historical fiction and don't need a particularly intellectualized approach to it, I highly recommend this book. On a recent 11 day vacation I read 6 books, and this one compared very well with some other excellent ones.

After reading Tarrt's book, *The Goldfinch*, I had a longing to know Rembrandt Van Rijn better. Lynn Cullen's book, *I Am Rembrandt's Daughter*, gave you a feel for the Amsterdam of the artist's time. The "bastard" daughter gave you a very harsh view of family life in the painter's home, the art milieu of the time, and the desire to belong in a family or in society from the viewpoint of a young girl. Cullen's easy style of story-telling draws the young and adult readers into another period of time. I found her other book, *Mrs. Poe*, just as captivating and immediately purchased all her other books. It also helped to understand another book by Nina Siegal's, *The Anatomy Lesson*, a lot better.

The book is okay but it's a slow read. I was a little disappointed after reading *Mrs. Poe*, another book by Lynn Cullen. I did enjoy the historical parts, though!

This was a very good historical fiction. I learned to love the characters. Cornelia alternates between her five year old self and her fourteen year old self. Both are important. There is some mystery with not knowing who everyone is and the role they play. But it all ties together in the end. I have to be honest, I bought this book to read based on how much I loved *Mrs. Poe*. I did not love this book as much. It seemed to be drier. But not dull. I applaud the author for being able to write this book with the Dutch influence in language. That gave the book the authenticity. If you like the art world or historical fiction or are just looking for a good read, then I recommend you read this book.

I read this book in one day. I could not put it down. The writing is smooth, and the harsh yet beautiful world of 17th century Amsterdam is absorbing. The story is realistic, romantic, and heart-tugging. Rich and human, we get a picture of Rembrandt but more so a picture of his family and struggles later in life. We feel his daughter Cornelia's yearning to paint even though society thought her place was to sweep her stoop and clean the dishes and not complain. Utterly imaginative and addictive. Highly recommended. Kelly Jameson

I've read this book before in 6th grade 10 years later it still hits me hard. It's a beautiful story pay close attention to the beginning it ties into the ending

History and art are my passions. This combines both beautifully. She also is an Atlanta author...from my 'new' home town!

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