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The Day Commodus Killed a Rhino: Understanding the Roman Games (Paperback)

By Jerry Toner

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS, United States, 2014. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 218 x 147 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. The Roman emperor Commodus wanted to kill a rhinoceros with a bow and arrow, and he wanted to do it in the Colosseum. Commodus passion for hunting animals was so fervent that he dreamt of shooting a tiger, an elephant, and a hippopotamus; his prowess was such that people claimed he never missed when hurling his javelin or firing arrows from his bow. For fourteen days near the end of AD 192, the emperor mounted one of the most lavish and spectacular gladiatorial games Rome had ever seen. Commodus himself was the star attraction, and people rushed from all over Italy to witness the spectacle. But this slaughter was simply the warm-up act to the main event: the emperor was also planning to fight as a gladiator. Why did Roman rulers spend vast resources on such over-the-top displays - and why did some emperors appear in them as combatants? Why did the Roman rabble enjoy watching the slaughter of animals and the sight of men fighting to the death? And how best can we in the modern world understand...



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