In 1595, Nzingha is the strong, intelligent daughter of the Ngola (leader) of the Mbundu people of Ndongo (in modern-day Angola), loyal to her people and willing to fight for them. Unfortunately, because she is a girl, her brother is the favored child, in training to become the next Ngola, even though he is whiny, stupid, and slow (according to Nzingha). But Ajala, a respected seer, believes that Nzingha is destined to be the leader of Ndongo, and begins preparing her for this future. Nzinghas father fights to keep the Portuguese from taking over their homeland, yet it is Nzingha, ultimately, who acts as the go-between for her people and the Portuguese, negotiating acceptable relations in order to keep peace and power for the Mbundu. Based on true historical events, places, people, and customs, this novel portrays the fascinating details of a remarkable young womans strength and courage in defending her world against subterfuge, spies, and the onslaught of the Portuguese. Historical notes,
Photos, illustrations, maps, the Ngola family tree, and a glossary and pronunciation guide are included for a comprehensive understanding of a complex era. Patricia McKissack is the well-respected and award-winning author of over 100 children's books and historical novels, including the Newbery Honor book The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural and Color Me Dark: The Diary of Nellie Lee Love (from the Dear America series). (Ages 9 to 12) --Emilie Coulter

Features:
* ISBN13: 9780439112109
* Condition: NEW
* Notes: Brand New from Publisher. No Remainder Mark.

**Personal Review: Nzingha: Warrior Queen of Matamba, Angola, Africa, 1595 (The Royal Diaries) by Patricia McKissack**
This book is my introduction to the Royal Diaries series, it has propelled me to seek out more from this line. I loved the story of a strong, independent, and determined young girl growing to become a woman in a male-dominated time. I feel this book was very informative and am truly disappointed by some of the reviews for this book. I do wish it was longer, as I found the story quite intriguing. Young Nzingha learns that not all your enemies are your enemies, with friends among the foe. I love the insight into the Mbundu people. I feel it was meant to give you a view into the people, not of the land of Angola. I will definitely be adding this one to the shelf for my daughter.

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