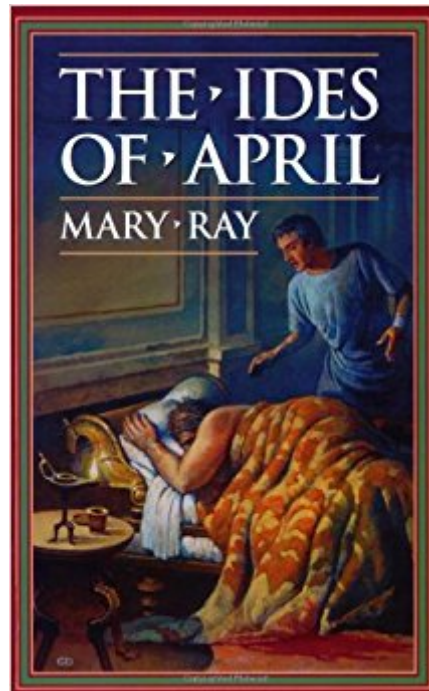




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# The Ides Of April (Ray, Mary, Roman Empire Sequence.)



## Synopsis

Hylas is a young Greek slave in the household of Caius Pomponius, a Roman Senator involved in political schemes. When the senator is found mysteriously murdered, the household slaves (including Hylas and his mother) fall under suspicion. Hylas escapes capture long enough to enlist the aid of a young tribune, Camillus Rufus. The desperate attempt to unravel the threads of the political intrigue carries Camillus into the very presence of Nero and brings Hylas into contact with the new secret sect of Christians

## Book Information

Series: Ray, Mary, Roman Empire Sequence.

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## Customer Reviews

People fantasize about the ancient world and as an ancient historian I'm often amused and annoyed by what these fantasies entail. This is especially true in books written for children and young adults where the nastiness (by our modern standards) of the ancient world are often overlooked and underplayed. Mary Ray's "The Ides of April" does a fairly good job of looking at the concerns of citizens, young people, and slaves in mid-first century Rome. While the murder mystery kicks off sharply I do wish she'd spent more time on the characters before the entire legal nightmare began so that we could be more emotionally invested in the characters. Likewise it ends a bit abruptly. I haven't read any of the other books of the series yet, but it seems like the same characters may not be encountered which is a pity. The characters are well done, they seem to grasp the mindset of the people of that time though I think holding onto a Greek identity when one is born a slave in Rome is a bit awkward. I'd recommend it to anyone between 14 and 20 who is interested in the ancient world

or in power dynamics in history. For those of us who are older, it can be entertaining as well.

My son like this book while studying the ancient history.

Great!

Fine

Good book

I got this book for my kids because they are studying ancient history this school year. My son (11) listened to it on audio and he liked it, although I'm not sure he caught some of the plot intricacies. I read it aloud to my daughter (9) and it was very difficult for her to understand what was going on. I personally liked the story line well enough, but I do think it is a bit hard to understand sometimes. In the author's attempt to be subtle, I even found myself a little confused at times. The political aspect of the storyline was pretty much lost on me - there was not enough detail to catch it. That being said, I truly love historical fiction and I liked the book. Definitely do not recommend for anyone younger than high school, unless they are a sophisticated reader.

The Ides of April is a historical fiction story by Mary Ray. Ray uses her unique skill to write a beautifully laced murder mystery in Rome 62 AD. Hylas is a young slave in the household of Caius Pomponius, a Roman senator. One horrible night, Caius is murdered in his sleep and all the slaves are rounded up and sent to prison to be murdered, except Hylas and Assinius, who disappeared right after the murder. Camillus, a military tribune, Varro, a porter, and Caius's aunt, Matidia, befriend Hylas. Together they race against time to find the murderer, bring him to justice, and free all the slaves kept in the dank and rotting prison. Ray creates an interesting ancient murder story by intertwining the glory of the Roman Empire with the death and destruction that comes with it, but, unfortunately, she introduces too many characters with similar names all at the same time which causes much confusion to the reader and makes it hard for them figure out who is who and who did what. Ray also creates the characters as though to make them distant from the reader. She creates them without any feelings so that the reader cannot say, "Yeah, I can relate to that." But, all in all, this is a good book because of the way Ray adds a gripping plot and twists and turns at every page. This story will interest younger teens and adults. I highly recommend it.

Mary Ray changes her style of writing from science fiction to historical fiction and writes the book *The Ides Of April*. Set in Rome just after the time of Christ, *The Ides Of April* is a murder mystery, which will keep you sitting on the edge of your seat wondering what will happen next. After a slave discovers his master, Caius Pomponius, was stabbed in the night all of the slaves of Caius Pomponius's household are rounded up to be murdered. All of them, that is, except Hylas, a young secretary for the household, and Assinius who elude capture. Hylas tries to find out who murdered Caius, with the help of his new friends, Camillus, a tribune, and Varro, an old man. Unfortunately, Hylas's mission isn't as easy as it sounds and he finds himself in a whirlwind of mystery and adventure. While *The Ides of April* was a fairly decent book, the author introduced many characters at once making the book a little challenging to follow. The beginning was a little boring because they were introducing the characters, rather than talking about the actual murder but as you get further on into the book it is more interesting because they really start solving the case. I think this was an a decent book, but it depends on if you enjoy Mary Rays slow paced adventure, style if writing as to whether you will really enjoy this book.

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