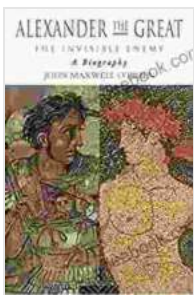


# Alexander the Great: The Invisible Enemy

Alexander the Great, the renowned king of Macedonia who conquered vast swathes of the known world in the 4th century BCE, is often remembered for his military prowess and strategic genius. However, less known is the invisible enemy that he and his army faced throughout their campaigns: malaria.



## Alexander the Great: The Invisible Enemy: A Biography

by Matthew White

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 535 pages  
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## A Silent Adversary

Malaria is a mosquito-borne disease that causes high fever, chills, sweating, and body aches. It is a deadly disease that has plagued humanity for centuries, and in ancient times, there was no cure or effective treatment.

As Alexander and his army marched through marshy areas and conquered new territories, they unknowingly exposed themselves to the malaria-carrying mosquitoes. The disease spread rapidly through the ranks, leaving soldiers weakened and vulnerable.

## **Impact on Alexander's Empire**

Malaria had a profound impact on Alexander's campaigns. It slowed down the army's advance, reduced their fighting capabilities, and weakened their overall morale. Historians estimate that up to a quarter of Alexander's army may have died from malaria or its complications.

The disease also affected Alexander himself. He suffered from recurring bouts of malaria throughout his campaigns, and it is believed to have contributed to his premature death at the young age of 32.

## **Historical Accounts**

Ancient Greek historians documented the prevalence of malaria in Alexander's army. Plutarch, in his biography of Alexander, writes about the "feverish distempers" that afflicted the troops and describes the symptoms as "violent sweats and shivering."

Arrian, another Greek historian, mentions that Alexander himself was "seized with a fever" while besieging Tyre and that he was "dangerously ill" at the time.

## **Medical Knowledge and Treatment**

In ancient times, the cause of malaria was unknown. Doctors believed that it was caused by bad air or "miasma" and that the disease could be treated through bloodletting and other ineffective remedies.

Alexander's physicians were unable to cure malaria, but they did provide some relief to the suffering soldiers. They used herbs and other natural remedies to reduce fever and pain, and they prescribed rest and hydration.

## **Aftermath and Legacy**

Despite the challenges posed by malaria, Alexander the Great managed to achieve remarkable military successes. He conquered vast territories, from Greece to India, and established one of the largest empires in history.

However, the invisible enemy of malaria left its mark on Alexander's legacy. It weakened his army, contributed to his own untimely death, and ultimately limited the extent of his empire.

In the centuries that followed, malaria continued to plague armies and populations around the world. It was not until the late 19th century that the cause of malaria was identified and effective treatments were developed, leading to a significant reduction in its global impact.

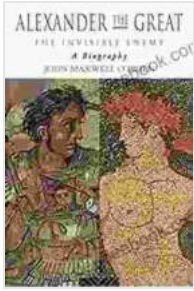
Alexander the Great's story is a testament to the challenges faced by ancient civilizations in the face of deadly diseases. Malaria, an invisible enemy, undermined the health and strength of his army, affected his own life, and played a role in shaping the course of his empire.

By understanding the impact of malaria on Alexander the Great, we gain a deeper appreciation for the challenges faced by this legendary conqueror and the resilience of humanity in the face of adversity.

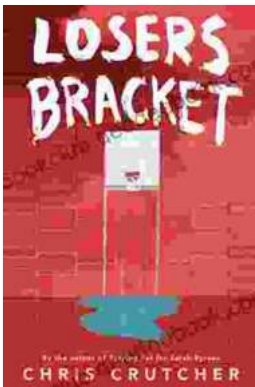
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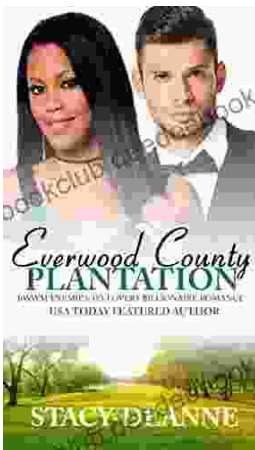


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