



A Dangerous Inheritance

Alison Weir

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England's Tower of London was the terrifying last stop for generations of English political prisoners. A Dangerous Inheritance weaves together the lives and fates of four of its youngest and most blameless: Lady Katherine Grey, Lady Jane's younger sister; Kate Plantagenet, an English princess who lived nearly a century before her; and Edward and Richard, the boy princes imprisoned by their ruthless uncle, Richard III, never to be heard from again. Across the years, these four young royals shared the same small rooms in their dark prison, as all four shared the unfortunate role of being perceived as threats to the reigning monarch.

A Dangerous Inheritance Details

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From Reader Review A Dangerous Inheritance for online ebook

Maria Grazia says

"I can never forget the day they brought me the news that my sister's head had been cut off. I was not yet thirteen, too young fully to understand why she had to die, but old enough to imagine the horrific scene at the end. They said she had committed treason, the foulest of all crimes, but it didn't make any sense to me for Jane had only done what she was forced to do. and by that reasoning, I too had been an innocent traitor, just as she was."

This is the opening of this incredible novel I've just finished reading. The young girl in distress for her sister's horrible, unfair death is Katherine Grey, only 13 at the time her sibling was crowned Queen of England for nine days only to be sentenced to death as a traitor soon after by Queen Mary Tudor (1554). After Jane's death, also the life of Katherine Grey will be full of sorrows and pains in her constant attempt to pursue true love as well as the recognition of her status as heiress to the throne of England. She will have to fight against a fierce and very powerful rival, Queen Elizabeth I, who saw her as a danger to her rule.

Lady Katherine Grey's fate is intertwined with the story of another unlucky young royal child, Kate Plantagenet, Richard III's illegitimate daughter. Katherine Grey finds her miniature portrait and a diary, and starts feeling sympathy for whom she imagined to be, like her, an unhappy victim of a dangerous inheritance: they both have their destinies signed by their having royal blood running through their veins.

The two stories develop onto parallel levels, distant in time, but so close in human suffering. Both girls will have to fight in the pursuit of true love: being of royal blood, a marriage for love is highly improbable for them. They have to marry for state reasons, they have to accept what parents and monarchs choose for them. The two different levels of the narration offer a privileged perspective on historical figures and facts: Kate Plantagenet lived at Richard III's court after his marriage to Anne Neville, while Katherine Grey is part of the Tudor family, cousin to Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth and always kept close to the court by all of them in order to check her movements as a possible contender.

The two stories merge into a quest for the truth about the tragic fate of the Princes in the Tower, after Richard III's coronation as king of England. Kate wants to purge her father tainted fame after his death at Bosworth, even risking her own life, and Katherine Grey, imprisoned like the young Princes in the Bell Tower by Elizabeth I, will try to get to the truth thanks to Kate's diary.

Is the mystery solved in the end? You'll have to check that out yourself reading the book. I'm not revealing any further detail.

Love, intrigue, power, cruelty and mystery are the main features of this gripping, remarkable historical picture of two different periods so similar in many aspects: Richard III's short kingdom and the following Tudor Era. The privileged female point of view on the well-known facts gives them a deeper human touch and makes history turns into a very touching tale.

Read the complete review in my post about this book at
<http://flyhigh-by-learnonline.blogspot...>

Cynthia Mearthur says

I regret that this book will be for sale on October 2nd. Why? The Richard III dig. I do not recommend this book to anyone just beginning with Richard. I am a Ricardian, yes. I have read a lot of information both pro- and anti- Richard and have made my judgment that he did not kill the princes. I will not go into everything that I have or haven't read, but I always keep an open mind.

And as such, I read Alison Weir's *The Princes in the Tower*. I am amazed that I did not throw the book into the fire when I was finished. That being said, I also kept an open mind when reading this book. I enjoyed *Innocent Traitor*, so I am prepared to enjoy an author's work, even if we don't see eye to eye on certain points.

Ok, I knew going in that she was anti-Richard, and I was prepared for that. However, the story is told from two different perspectives in two different time periods in two different points of view. Katherine Grey, from the bizarre present tense view of past events; and Katherine Plantagenet, Richard's illegitimate daughter, third person point of view. Then, about 70% through the book we have an interlude of Elizabeth I's point of view...it just didn't flow to me. I admire authors who try to do something different with their writing, but this was uninspired and mundane and the interlude just struck me as weird. Alison said in her author's note that she put the interludes there so that the reader would know Elizabeth's point of view, and not see her as a monster. Ok, so why not also have Richard's point of view in an interlude as well? It would have made more sense, and hey, if she still wanted to portray him as an aspiring tyrant, fine. At least the perspectives would have made a little more sense.

So, was I impressed? No. Do I regret reading the book? Maybe. Will I ever read another of Weir's novels? Probably not.

Now, I will go refresh my soul with the Richard book I recommend to everyone, Sharon Kay Penman's *The Sunne in Splendour*, one of the best books I have ever read.

Allie says

Can't wait...such a huge fan of Alison Weir...Lady Elizabeth, Innocent Traitor, and Captive Queen were SO GOOD!!!!!!!!!!!!

Oh my goodness just got it out of the library today it's such a beautiful book I can't wait!

Simon says

My favorite moment? Katherine Grey describing another character as a "sadist" in 1561. A moment while we all let that sink in.

This isn't a novel. Neither of Weir's protagonists undergoes any kind of developmental arc at all. Nor is there an actual plot that connects them, despite contortions that rival a Cirque de Soleil performance. By the third character who showed up to explain things to either Katherine Grey or Kate Plantagenet ("She's a Countess! She's a Bastard! They're Detectives!"), things that never in a million years would have been divulged to either, you know that Weir is simply out to make her point. What point is that? That Richard III killed the Princes in the Tower.

I'll wait while someone gets you the smelling salts and you recover.

By the end of this incredibly long, tedious, *badly written* whatever the hell it is, Weir abandons any literary pretensions whatsoever, and spends about 200 pages just piling up the evidence. Katherine Grey, imprisoned in the Tower, starts to function as a daffy Mycroft Holmes, with her warden acting as Watson. He brings her the More history, he digs up witnesses (third-hand witnesses, but witnesses), he talks to her about the case. Katherine is preoccupied with the fate of the Princes because she herself is in the same slammer and --- get this --- at night she hears pitiful voices crying "Help us!!! Save ussssss!!!!!" So she suddenly turns into a Tudor Nancy Drew and sets out to discover the truth.

Meanwhile, back in the past, Kate Plantagenet, illegitimate daughter of Richard, is sleuthing herself. Once her incredibly loving and completely unbelievable father Richard goes south to look after his nephew Edward V, his personality changes, and wham, bam, next thing you know he's the King of England and she's watching his marriage to Anne Neville devolve in ways that make no sense whatsoever --- which at least makes it consistent with everything else in this book. So she too sets out to discover what has happened to her "cousins", as she gratingly refers to them. Kate also makes scenic side trips along the way to pitch a little woo with John de la Pole. I am not cutting for spoilers because 1) you not only don't see it coming, you don't care when it does and 2) *none of this matters in the slightest*.

At some point, Weir was probably going for a different kind of story, because Katherine Grey keeps getting mysterious visions of Kate Plantagenet, and at least once Kate spots Katherine Grey skulking in the crowd that hears Buckingham offer Richard the throne. Don't worry about trying to make sense of these moments. Weir never does.

So the book comes down to the argument Weir makes that Richard killed his nephews. If you care, you care. But honestly? Watch *Dark Shadows*. "Night has fallen on Middleham, a dark night that brings dark wails from the dark past. . ."

Lolly's Library says

3.5 stars

*From the blurb: England's Tower of London was the terrifying last stop for generations of English political prisoners. A **Dangerous Inheritance** weaves together the lives and fates of four of its youngest and most blameless: Lady Katherine Grey, Lady Jane's younger sister; Kate Plantagenet, an English princess who lived nearly a century before her; and Edward and Richard, the boy princes imprisoned by their ruthless uncle, Richard III, never to be heard from again. Across the years, these four young royals shared the same small room in their dark prison, as all four shared the unfortunate role of being perceived as threats to the reigning monarch.*

First off, I have to say, I'm a bit peeved at this book. According to the blurb, the impression that I got was that the stories were supposed to be told from the viewpoints of Katherine Grey and Katherine Plantagenet (which they were), and the two princes in the tower. Of course, I didn't know how those two princes, Edward and Richard, would be able to tell their story. Through hidden letters perhaps? A secret diary or journal? Who knew, but whatever the case, it would've been a most interesting tale. So, naturally, I was disappointed when I realized the book was only told from the viewpoints of the two women as they worked to solve the disappearance of the two princes.

Anyway, to these two women: The first is Katherine Grey, the prettier, more vivacious sister to Lady Jane Grey, the doomed and ill-used Nine Days Queen. Katherine's story is told in the first-person, in her voice, and while her life story is laid out according to historical sources, Weir slips in imagined instances where Katherine discovers information and artifacts linked to the princes in the tower, which creates a fascination in her to try and solve the mystery of their disappearance. The other Katherine in the book is Katherine Plantagenet, the illegitimate daughter of the Duke of Gloucester, future King Richard III. Her story is told in the third-person, and because the princes disappeared during her father's reign, her part in the novel has more urgency to it. In fact, she's quite frantic about solving the mystery because, ever the dutiful daughter, as Richard rises to power and as she's exposed to the stories of his behavior, Katherine refuses to believe that her father could've behaved in such dastardly ways and steadfastly tries to prove all his critics wrong.

Though the novel is touted as being one of historical suspense, revolving around the princes in the tower, it didn't feel that way to me. Yes, each Kate tries to solve the mystery in her own way, but that particular "mystery solving" plot device didn't seem to be driving the novel, at least not as much with the Katherine Grey storyline. And with the Katherine Plantagenet storyline, solving the mystery was less about, you know, *solving* it than it was about a slightly naive daughter trying to clear her father's name. Instead, it was each Kate's life propelling the plot, especially their romantic entanglements, with the only suspense coming when events finally catch up to the girls and they find themselves incarcerated in the Tower of London. Frankly, while I enjoyed the book, I'm not quite sure what the point of it was. After all, Weir has explored the mystery of the princes in the tower in her non-fiction book on the subject (*The Princes in the Tower*), and if she wanted to explore the lives of the two Kates, she could've written a non-fiction book or books about them as well.

I will say this: Weir did a good job of presenting a fair portrait of Richard III. She drew Katherine Plantagenet as basically a mouthpiece for for the Friends of King Richard Society, those dedicated people who believe that everything written about Richard was a lie and he was actually a very good, downright saintly man. As this mouthpiece, Katherine refuses to accept the evidence coming to her of Richard's actions, searching (in vain) to find alternate explanations and trying to reconcile what she knows about her father with what she's hearing about him. The resulting image is what I believe to be the fairest picture of Richard. It's the image of a man who was ruthless, who wanted power, who (yes) had his nephews murdered, but a man who was also devout, a family man, a man who truly grieved when his brother, Edward IV, died. Basically, a man who was no more evil than any other man (and woman) who came to power and did ruthless things on the way or while there, but who was painted as the blackest of villains because it was expedient to do. A man who was not Shakespeare's deformed hunchback, but a man with a slight deformity who became beaten down by his enemies and history. So while Richard's Friends might not like the resulting picture, I think it's one which will satisfy all but the most obdurate on the subject.

Speaking of representing an historical personage accurately, Weir portrayed Frances Grey, and to some extent Henry Grey, as the abusive parents they've long become accepted as, a view which has come under fire in the past few years. Some researchers and historians are now saying that that image has been overblown and colored by personal animosity, either on the part of Jane herself or her tutor, Roger Ascham.

Weir addresses this issue in her (detailed) author's note; she explains that she questions the theory that there has been a deliberate attempt to blacken Frances' name down the centuries, and that new research suggests that the traditional view of the Suffolks is indeed correct, though "it is conceivable that a chastened Frances mellowed after Jane's execution, as portrayed in this novel, and that Katherine and Mary never suffered the rigor and expectations that their parents imposed on Jane." There has been some discussion over Weir's ability as an historian, with some seeing her as lax or sloppy, or pandering to public popularity, but I think this author's note shows her dedication to her research and to seeking out the best, most logical explanation for disputed issues.

In the end, **A Dangerous Inheritance** was entertaining reading (though the quick back-and-forth between the two Kates got a bit dizzying at times, especially since Kate Plantagenet's interludes were often rather short), but rather pointless, unless you've never heard of or read anything about the two princes in the tower. If that's the case, then you should read this book as it presents an interesting and logical solution to the centuries-old mystery within a fictional framework, making for an easy and well-written read.

Marita says

I usually enjoy reading books written by the historian Alison Weir, whether they be history texts or historical novels, and *A Dangerous Inheritance* is no exception. This novel relates in tandem the tragic stories of Katherine Plantagenet, the illegitimate daughter of Richard III the last of the Plantagenet kings, and Lady Katherine Grey, sister to Lady Jane Grey and relative to Elizabeth I the last ruler of the Tudor dynasty.

I have taken a considerable amount of time (by my standards) to read this novel. There is much to digest and ponder. One also has to keep one's wits about one to know who's who in this Plantagenet/Tudor zoo.

The author uses the stories of these women to enter into a debate about Richard III's innocence or culpability with regard to the mysterious disappearance and/or murder of the princes in the tower. In my opinion it is useful to read arguments for both sides of the debate regardless of whether one believes in Richard's innocence or guilt, and ultimately the author allows the reader to make his/her own decision.

Reading about Katherine Grey, her Ned and their babies always makes me reach for a box of tissues. I was not familiar with the story of Katherine Plantagenet and its parallels to Katherine Grey's story, and read it with much interest. It seems that in that era parents were sometimes quite happy to barter their children for more wealth and power, as is the case with the sisters Grey. Being of royal blood was a dangerous inheritance indeed.

Susan Johnson says

This story is about the two young princes locked in the Tower and thought to have been murdered by the evil King Richard. I say thought to have been murdered as no one has been ever conclusively able to prove it. It's this mystery that draws the interest of two different Kates living eighty years apart. One is Katherine Grey, sister of Jane Grey, and one is Katherine Plantagenet, the illegitimate daughter of King Richard. It's the story of these two women looking for answers.

It is a dangerous inheritance to be in line with the throne. The two young princes were imprisoned in the

Tower and never seen again because they were the legitimate heirs to the throne. Katherine Grey is in line for the throne and she is imprisoned for having the audacity to marry and have children. How dare she! It didn't seem like any bargain to be that close to the throne.

What Alison Weir does brilliantly is to capture the giddiness of those two Kates. It's hard to remember that they were just kids. Katherine Grey was married at 13. Katherine Plantagenet was dead at 17. They were just two young teen-agers and not yet skilled in their treacherous world. Katherine Grey wanted to be Queen. Of course she did. She envisioned a world of pretty gowns and marrying who she wanted. I doubt seriously she wanted to hurt Queen Elizabeth. It's hard to remember that these were just kids and Weir does a great job reminding us of that.

I found the story a little cumbersome. I thought the two women each deserved their own book. They were so close to the seat of power. Katherine Grey, in fact, was Queen Elizabeth's heir even if the Queen stubbornly refused to name her. Katherine Plantagenet was King Richard's daughter and thought the world of him. As his rule continued and facts emerged of his cruelty, Katherine desperately tried to keep her belief in her father. It wasn't until the death of her stepmother that she started to lose her faith in him.

I found it hard to keep relationships straight and had to consult the family tree of the Lancaster/Yorks often trying to keep people straight. Everybody was Edward, Richard and Henry or Katherine, Elizabeth and Anne. I was familiar enough with the Tudors to not have this problem. There just seemed to be too many characters to keep straight. That's the main reason I thought there should have been separate books.

The book really comes together the last 100 pages. It becomes very compelling as the story ties up the loose ends. By then I was comfortable with all the characters and the story just flowed. It was an interesting read and overall I enjoyed it.

Sarah (Presto agitato) says

A Dangerous Inheritance weaves together the stories of two women of the Plantagenet/Tudor eras. The first is Katherine ("Kate") Plantagenet (? - before 1487), the illegitimate daughter of Richard III. She is largely a fictional creation as little is known about her life. The second is the somewhat better known Katherine Grey (1540-1568), a sister of Lady Jane Grey who was herself imprisoned in the Tower of London for many years for marrying Edward Seymour without Queen Elizabeth's permission. Her real crime was in being too close in succession order to the throne. The ever-paranoid Elizabeth, always worried about rebellion, was afraid of her having a son.

There is a subtle supernatural element here hinting at a connection between these two women. They had a tangential family relationship. During the Lady Jane Grey debacle, Katherine Grey was married briefly to the great-nephew of Kate Plantagenet's husband. It's not exactly a compelling justification for this link that somehow transcends the laws of time and space. The more likely element that ties them together is curiosity about the fate of the Princes in the Tower, the nephews of Richard III who disappeared as he took the throne. For Katherine Grey, her interest seems to be largely due to boredom while cooped up in the Tower, but for Kate it is more personal as she doesn't want to believe her father could have been responsible for doing away with the Princes.

The stories themselves are interesting ones, but the connection between the stories and the two heroines wasn't convincing enough to justify switching back and forth between them. A story about Katherine Grey

or the Princes or even Kate Plantagenet could probably stand on its own and be stronger for it. Here everything gets a little muddled.

Alison Weir is known for her histories of the eras covered in this book, but she has ventured into historical fiction with a few other books. Her historical detail and knowledge of the times added to the story without overwhelming it. Her conclusions about the Princes will be controversial for many, just as her history of that topic (The Princes in the Tower) was among some (view spoiler) readers.

In historical fiction, plausibility is key. Weir's setting is authentic. Aside from the vague supernatural undertone, so are most of the thoughts and actions of the characters. The idea of using parallel stories was an ambitious one, though, and the connection wasn't clear enough and the voices of the characters were not distinct enough for it to be completely successful.

Brian says

I never thought the day would come when I would give four stars to an Alison Weir book - probably it should be three and a half, but anyway...

The positives - this book reminded me that Ms Weir is a much better *writer* than Philippa Gregory. PG's books generally hit the wall within a maximum of three chapters. This was thoroughly readable. I have always suspected that a very good writer of *fiction* was inside AW trying to get out - this book tends to support that theory.

The book is about two Katherines in different times - Katherine Plantagenet (Richard III's daughter) and Katherine Grey (Elizabeth I's cousin) living (obviously) in different times and both (in their own way) trying to solve The Mystery of the Princes. The other thing in common is that they both have dreadful real world lives. There's a bit of spooky stuff connecting them, but thankfully no witchcraft.

Anyone who has read Weir's 'factual' book about the Princes will not be surprised by the ultimate conclusion. Sadly, I think AW is one of those people who has swallowed More whole and believes his work is accurate and not - as in fact it is - one which contains at least half a dozen *demonstrable* falsehoods. (I gave up after counting six.)

Other myths repeated here: The oft-repeated idea that Edward V had a bad disease of the jaw bone. There is no evidence for this at all, other than the condition of one of the skeletons claimed to be the Princes - the identity of the skeletons is, to put it mildly, a subject of debate. Secondly, the oft-repeated theory that Richard was planning to marry Elizabeth of York. Sorry, but just because it's in Croyland doesn't make it true. There were arrangements in hand for Richard to marry a Portuguese princess and Elizabeth to marry a Portuguese prince. This has been known for years but somehow-it-just-does-not get-through. Thirdly the belief Croyland was Bishop Russell. This idea has been exploded. As Croyland apparently didn't know about the Portugal marriages he was clearly not as well informed as some people like to make out.

Anyway, as a work of fiction not bad at all. I suppose I did find the constant switching between the periods a bit irritating, but that's me. And, as so often, I found myself wondering how Sir William Cecil was able to do his job for so many years without being taken away by the men in white coats. Elizabeth I as an employer would have driven me nuts - or rather, nuttier.

Susanna - Censored by GoodReads says

Wanted nice Tudor story about Lady Catherine Grey; got "Richard III did a bad, bad thing."

Organization was such that just as I got into one story line, the one from the other period started up, and it threw me off completely. Then the ghost stuff showed up, and I abandoned. Very unlikely to ever give this one a second chance.

Orsolya says

The Princes in the Tower are a delicious historical mystery which still mystifies many Anglophiles. Alison Weir's new angle on the mystery portrays Kate Plantagenet and Katherine Grey attempting to unravel some of the dark secrets behind the brothers' disappearance in "A Dangerous Inheritance".

Initially, "A Dangerous Inheritance" appears to be two books in one: one portraying Kate Plantagenet and another following Katherine Grey. It can be concluded that Weir wanted to write a book on each but instead of giving in to the inevitable speculation which would have resulted from the lack of sufficient resources; she combined the figures and opted for a historical fiction novel instead. However, I would have rather read a light history book, as the historical events mentioned are generally accurate (albeit with the usual Weir stances/views) and include a sufficient amount of detail and pleasing descriptions (also typical of Weir).

The fiction, on the contrary, feels forced with a very juvenile-level dialogue. The characters (especially the main heroines) are very one dimensional and child-like (granted they are children in the story); while the other supporting roles are stereotypical (evil, hunchback Richard!). This prevented me from experiencing any depth and from feeling a connection to the story.

I **do** give Weir credit for attempting to give some limelight to Kate Plantagenet (a bastard child of Richard III); as she is often ignored and sometimes disputed as Richard's daughter. Furthermore, as the reader realizes the concept behind "A Dangerous Inheritance"; it is recognized how creative it is. Rather than trying to connect Kate and Katherine directly, Weir fashioned a detective story in which Katherine Grey seeks to find conclusions regarding the disappearance behind the Princes in the Tower. Weir alternates between Katherine's discoveries and the actual events which Kate may have experienced during her own time.

Although this is an interesting devising of the story of the Princes; the detective work reads like a YA fiction novel (it is very Nancy Drew: Ghosts! Shadows!). Plus, Weir sticks to her usual opinions versus attempting to work through her characters to look at other leads or viewpoints. There is certainly no new information and neither is "A Dangerous Inheritance" Ricardian friendly.

Weir executes the heroines' investigations accurately in respect to what evidence would have been available to both during their respective time periods. Although Weir may have been tempted by evidence since discovered/debated; the story felt "real" by their absence. The pace throughout "A Dangerous Inheritance" is rather smooth and moves the story along swiftly.

Somewhat odd are the "interludes" by Elizabeth I which are an attempt to personalize her actions but felt

awkward and too arranged.

The "Author's Note" was the best part of the novel, providing a couple facts I was unaware of. Weir also asserts that this is a fictional work and not meant to be an "authoritative source" (do you hear that, you readers who believe everything?).

Although I found "A Dangerous Inheritance" to remind me of "Three Maids for a Crown" by Ella March Chase and even though the novel wasn't "for me" due to my minimal interest in mysteries; I can see why others would enjoy it. "A Dangerous Inheritance" is not necessarily to be discredited; it just personally wasn't to my liking this time.

Samantha says

'A Dangerous Inheritance' is a story with definite potential. Unfortunately, Weir uses it as a platform to once again state her case for Richard III as the murderer of the Princes in the Tower. Yes, the case is well made, but she already wrote that book, right? I would have enjoyed this novel much more if she had focused on the main characters of the book, Kate Plantagenet and Katherine Grey.

Weir's characterization of Kate Plantagenet, illegitimate daughter of Richard III, is almost complete supposition as little is known of her life. Her great faith in her father and wanting to believe the best of him is certainly believable. Her relationship with her cousin John de la Pole was also touching and not too farfetched. The fact that most of her conversations centered on her attempting to discover the truth about the Princes in the Tower just got a little bit boring. I can accept that she would like to clear her father's name or know the truth for her own sake, but too much of this dialogue does nothing but inform the reader without coming across as realistic. The girl was a little obsessed, and I would have rather just learned about her.

The same holds true for Katherine Grey, sister to the doomed Jane Grey. For some reason this young woman with her own claim to the throne also becomes consumed with learning the truth about the Princes. Katherine's life story is one that is well documented, tragic, and gripping, so why detract from it with more unlikely dialogue just to keep the focus on the Princes? Katherine is a person that draws sympathy from the reader despite her foolishness and selfishness. She truly was dealt with harshly from a very young age and never given a reprieve.

Weir attempts to make a connection between these two young Katherines, who lived approximately 70 years apart, based on their commitment to discovering the truth about the Princes. Other interesting connections are made. Grey is arrested and held in the tower due to her royal blood, much as the Princes were. Both young women are torn from their true love (though historically we do not actually know that of KP). Weir tries to take the connection a step further by inserting paranormal connections between them. KG sees ghosts of KP and feels coldness and despair when trying on her pendant or entering a place where KP experienced trauma. Maybe others weren't bothered by these sections, but I like my historical fiction to be a little more, well...historical.

The first 100 pages or so of this novel feels too much like a rehash of things that Weir has already written between her 'Innocent Traitor,' 'Princes in the Tower,' and 'Lady Elizabeth,' and I almost gave up altogether when paranormal activity was added to my frustration over this. In the end, I am glad I persevered. The Katherines' stories are intriguing in their own right and could have been told without having to be

overshadowed by the ghosts of little Edward and Richard.

Carole Lehr says

This story is so filled with British history it will make a dyed-in-the-wool Anglophile's head spin! Although I did find this novel to be slow in building momentum, it did start to redeem itself about two-thirds of the way through. I love British history but felt it a bit tedious at times. It was nice when I finally became engrossed with the story(ies).

Katherine and Jane Grey are puppets of their parents, Henry Grey and Lady Frances Brandon. They plot and scheme until Jane is placed on the throne, only to be imprisoned for unlawfully accepting the English crown for nine days (hence the term The Nine Days' Queen). Katherine's life story in the sixteenth century is then told and entwined with Kate (Katherine) Plantagenet's life in the fifteenth century. When Katherine Grey finds a portrait of Kate Plantagenet and old letters in a chest, dating back more than seven decades, she becomes intrigued with the writer's quest to find out what happened to the Princes. Her interest follows her for the rest of her life.

Katherine Grey ends up in the Tower because of her closeness to the throne. Queen Elizabeth I sees her as a threat and places her in the Tower along with her husband (which the Queen refuses to acknowledge as legitimate) and children. Although she holds them in different areas of the Tower, they manage to see one another by bribing the guards and because of the kindheartedness of one of their jailers.

Much of the story tells of both women questioning the disappearance of the Princes in the Tower in the fifteenth century. They each seek to find the truth. One, to clear her father's name in the involvement of the Princes and the other as a mystery to be solved and as a diversion for all she has to endure.

During many centuries of British history, people who were even remotely close to the throne lived life on the edge. The King--or Queen--in power had the say over who could marry. These two women dared to live for the love of their lives, even to the point of imprisonment or death.

With Kate Plantagenet being the illegitimate daughter of King Richard III, one would think there would be much more historical evidence to aid Ms. Weir in telling her story--even the portions of the book that delve into the disappearance of the royal Princes held in the Tower. She admits there is not sufficient evidence to do justice in telling Kate's story, yet she does a marvelous job of inventing a believable character for the era.

Her telling of Katherine Grey's life is followed so closely to documented facts--and expertly told--that I felt like I was there in the Tower of London with her. Overall, I would recommend this book if you are into historical fiction. These two young women endured sad, oppressed existences, yet they stood their ground and were brave right up until the end of their short lives. They may have been rich in wealth by the standards of their day, yet they had no freedom.

Andrea says

I finished reading "A Dangerous Inheritance," but as a former member of the Richard III Society (dedicated to clearing his name and to proving he didn't kill the little princes) I'm pretty sorry I bought this book. It's a good read, but it makes my blood boil to read about Richard as villain and I hate to support such allegations with my book money. I suggest that people wanting to know more about the era and the issues read Josephine Tey's "The Daughter of Time."

Michele says

Weir gets her history straight and as a history buff, I certainly do admire that in a historical fiction writer. What didn't work for me was the execution of this novel. The chapters alternate between Catherine Grey, the sister of Jane Grey (the infamous Nine Days Queen of England) and Katherine Plantagenet, the illegitimate daughter of Richard III. (For those of you doing the math, there were about 70 years or so between these two ladies). Truthfully, I'm still scratching my head trying to figure out the connection between these two women that Weir clearly wanted the reader to make. I never did 'get it.'

Aside from that execution snafu, Weir writes decent historical fiction. I enjoy the dialog, the set up, etc....she never puts her characters in situations that are silly or unrealistic. She gives just enough attention to details like food, dress, etc to keep me interested.

The reason for my three stars is this: I didn't care for or understand the flipping POVs between chapters. I simply did not see the relevance and it's only effect was to turn Catherine Grey into a Tudor-era 'detective' who wants to solve the mystery of who killed the Princes in the Tower. It is this vehicle that Weir uses to advocate her thoughts on history's greatest 'whodunit'. I won't give away who she thinks guilty of the crime, but if you've read any of her non-fiction work, suffice it to say that she hasn't changed views over the years. ;)

In order to justify her views on who is guilty, Weir incorporates just about every historical source we have available to us today (which really isn't anything all that reliable, at least not from a historian's point of view). While I enjoyed this tactic, other readers who are unfamiliar with the nitty gritty details of Richard III's reign might not appreciate it being woven into the storyline. Then again, maybe they will...who am I to judge, right?

If you end up enjoying the fictional approach to the real-life mystery of what happened to the Princes in the Tower, be sure to get your hands on a copy of Josephine Tey's novel, Daughter of Time. It features a modern-day (relatively speaking, of course, as the novel was written years and years ago) laid up in a hospital bed with nothing to do and decides to tackle the mystery of what happened to the princes and who did it....it is absolutely phenomenal and a far better attempt to 'solve' the mystery than A Dangerous Inheritance. Weir's novel I would recommend as a library check-out.
