



## The Boleyn Deceit

*Laura Andersen*

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**Torn between his kingdom and the woman he loves... .**

William Tudor, now King Henry IX, sits alone on the throne. But England must still contend with those who doubt his legitimacy. William is betrothed to a young princess from France, but still he has eyes only for his childhood friend Minuette, and court tongues are wagging.

Even more dangerous – if discovered – is that Minuette’s heart and soul belong to Dominic, William’s best friend and trusted advisor...

## **The Boleyn Deceit Details**

Date : Published November 5th 2013 by Ballantine Books (first published January 1st 2013)

ISBN :

Author : Laura Andersen

Format : Kindle Edition 416 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Science Fiction, Alternate History, Fiction, Romance, English History, Tudor Period

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## From Reader Review The Boleyn Deceit for online ebook

### Heidi says

Four stars: An entertaining, well researched book that presents an alternate course in history.

Henry IX, William, the son of the infamous Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII, is the royal heir to the throne of England. At eighteen, he is one of the most powerful men in Europe. Yet he is surrounded by treachery and deceit as those around him try and usurp his power. The country is still squabbling over religious differences, thanks to his father and his lustful desires. The loyal Catholics still believe that Henry's half sister Mary should be crowned Queen, and they will stop at nothing to see that she reaches the throne. Meanwhile, William is trying to maintain a shaky peace with the French by entering in an engagement with the nine year old French princess. Truth be told, William has no intention of marrying the French girl, his heart belongs to another, Minuette, the orphan ward of his late mother. The problem is Minuette's is taken by someone else. William is surrounded by people who are bent on their own desires, even those he trusts the most. Will William keep his throne and marry the girl he loves?

What I Liked:

\*I am fascinated by the torrid, bloody and treacherous history of the Tudor family. Henry VIII remains an interesting and despicable villain even today. I enjoyed delving into a book that takes the written history and turns everything upside down by presenting an alternate version of the events. In Ms. Andersen's vision, Henry and Anne's son is not stillborn, instead he survives to ascend to the throne. At eighteen, William rules the country with an iron fist, while getting what he wants. He is his father's son after all. In this alternate version of history, Anne was not executed, instead she died of illness. Her brother, George Boleyn, Lord Rochford and his wife Jane survive, and in fact, George remains a closer advisor to William. The story follows a quartet of characters, William, Elizabeth, Dominic and Minuette. Three are fictional, while Elizabeth is presented as the strong, determined woman we all know from history. Even though this is a fictional account, Ms. Andersen implements her story with accurate historical characters, and she follows true events while spinning her own tale. There is still plenty of deceit, plotting and betrayals as the noblemen of William's court attempt to conspire against him and remove him from the throne. The biggest traitor is someone right under William's nose. It was entertaining to navigate through this fictional account, and I liked piecing together the evidence to find the enemy.

While I liked all four of the main characters, Elizabeth by far was my favorite. She is intriguing and I loved seeing her flounder as she suffers through a romantic betrayal. Robert Dudley is indeed a true player in Elizabeth's life and most of the events depicted in the book involving Dudley actually happened. I loved watching the young, yet noble and intelligent Elizabeth grow into the smart and capable woman who led England so successfully. William, Henry IX, has many of the same tendencies as his father. He is young, rash and lustful and willing to throw away the peace of his country for a woman. He tries to be loyal to his friends, but in the end, his own selfish desires overrule his good intentions. I liked getting to know the fictional son of Anne and Henry VIII. Minuette is a sweet, lovely young lady who is caught between two powerful men. She is smart and unwilling to let someone get away with murder. I appreciated her fortitude and liked watching her unravel the mystery. Dominic, aside from Elizabeth, was my favorite character. He is William's best friend and confidant. He holds Minuette's heart, but is unable to be honest with William about his romantic interest. Despite the fact that Dominic is in love with Minuette, he remains loyal and true to William. He is noble, kind and the type of man who should be the King.

\*I am not well read on the Tudor dynasty, in fact, I found myself googling certain people and events in history as I read so I could compare. What I did find was that despite the fact that Ms. Andersen is presenting a fictional account, she has taken the time to research and present a historically accurate portrayal of most of

the events recounted in the story. The turmoil in the country over religion, the plotting and so forth are tweaked a bit to fit the story, but for the most part the events are true to history. The characters in the book, aside from the three main fictional characters are all actual historical people. If you are a fan of books that are all about the Tudor era, and you want something a bit different, take a chance and pick this up. Even though it is not a true account, it is well researched and detailed.

\*I enjoyed putting together the clues in the book to try and uncover a murderer and a traitor. Just when I thought everything was figured out, there are a couple of surprising twists and I was startled to find out who the true perpetrator was.

And The Not So Much:

\*The biggest problem I had was keeping everything straight and grasping what was going on. Probably the majority of my problems was due to the fact that I plunged in and started with the second book. It was a sink or swim read, and I did struggle in the beginning as I floundered to understand the historical changes and the characters. However, I was patient and I did manage to plant my feet on the ground about a quarter of the way through. Ms. Andersen does a good job of providing plenty of refresher details throughout so I wasn't too lost. Even though I was able to piece together the story, I would not recommend going into this without having read the first book. I still don't know how Henry VIII died in this version and I am anxious now to go back and find out. I am planning on reading the first book as soon as possible.

\*The other thing that hindered my read was trying to keep all the characters straight. Thankfully, many of them are true historical people so I was able to stop and look up people and events so I had a clearer picture. What made it difficult for me was that so many of the characters' had two names, for instance, sometimes George Boleyn was referred to as George but most of the time he was Lord Rochford. I would love for the book to include a quick reference guide with all the characters, titles and all that. It would make the read so much easier. There are also many plots and story lines to keep track of and it is a bit of a challenge. I am worried that when I reach the final book, I will be suffering from book amnesia and that I will struggle to reacquaint myself with everything again.

\*Elizabeth was by far my favorite character. I was a bit disappointed that of all the main characters, her role was the smallest. I wished that she had a bigger part as I find her fascinating. I am hoping she will be in the picture more next time out.

\*Finally, the plot builds and builds toward the revelation of the traitor and murderer. Once everything seems to be uncovered and it is at the thrilling climax, the story suddenly diverts to a completely different story line involving the French. I was riveted during the final portion of the book, until things turned to the French. I was frustrated that after all the buildup, that the story veered away. It finally returns to the main conflict at the end when one of the accused drops a startling confession as to who is really behind the treachery. The book ends on a jaw dropping cliffhanger as the fate of the traitor and the health of William lie in the balance. I am now most eager to read the conclusion.

The Boleyn Deceit is an entertaining and exciting presentation of an alternate version of England's history. I liked exploring the possibility of a male Tudor heir on the throne and watching as William tries to pick up the pieces from the fall out of his father's folly. Despite the fact that this isn't an actual historical account, it is well researched and it does try and maintain as much historical accuracy as possible. If you are a fan of historical fiction and if you like all the treachery, deceit and terror during the Tudor era, treat yourself and check this out.

Favorite Quotations:

"We all carry with us our pasts. Who we were then informs who we are now."

I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are my own and I was not compensated for this review.

Posted@Rainy Day Ramblings.

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### **Lori says**

The second book in this series and it was just as good if not better than the first!!! Loved it and recommend it to any fan of the Tudors!!! Really can not wait for the final book!!! 5 BIG stars for this one!!!

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### **Kelly (Belle of the Literati) says**

Bloody hell, this was amazing! I need The Boleyn Reckoning IMMEDIATELY! Also, it is quite jarring having finished, looking around, and realizing I'm not in 1555 England. That's the caliber of storytelling. ALL the feels.

Full review to come <3

You guys...YOU GUYS! I know that I always say dystopia and fantasy are my comfort genres but there is just something so magical that happens to me while reading historical fiction...GOOD historical fiction. If you know me or read this blog before you may know I have an intense obsession with Anne Boleyn, the Tudor family, and the War of the Roses era. Obsession is an understatement.

Laura Andersen's alternate history about Anne Boleyn's son living and becoming king is a story that is so amazing words will most likely fail me in this review. So, I LOVED The Boleyn King and freaked my shit a little bit when I saw it on NetGalley. I don't think I've checked my email that obsessively for a while. I digress.

#### **MILD SPOILERS FROM THE BOLEYN KING AHEAD...YOU'VE BEEN WARNED**

Our story continues with the holy quartet, Minuette, Dominic, William, and Elizabeth. First of all, I love these characters. They are so strong, intelligent, and loyal to one another and their dynamics between each other are my favorite parts. I love friendships that have grown since knowing each other their whole lives. However, as adults things have become much more complicated. William is king and with that comes a lot of difficult decisions to keep the realm in order. While some of his decisions were not always 'for the good of England' and more for the good of Will, his job is not easy and I liked seeing him come into his own more as a monarch.

A lot of his independence, I think, comes from being to well advised by Dom. \*sigh\* I love Dom. LOVE LOVE LOVE. He is so strong, level-headed, smart, quiet, and totally devoted to those he loves \*coughMinuettecough\*. But I'll get to that later. No, forget this, I'm getting to it now. The romance. YOU GUYS! This love story is epic and secret and slightly forbidden. My heart was racing and breaking and soaring all at different times. The agony of reading about Will loving Minuette and stealing moments with her all while Dom has to stand by and watch BROKE MY HEART! I lurve him so much. Anyways. And the few moments we do get between Dom and Minuette...\*le sigh\* Major sighing action going on. I adore them. The realization that none of this can end well sat in my chest the entire book. Like, how is this going to end happily for my Dom and Minuette...how?!?

But really, that's not the entire story. It's just my favorite part. I think my favorite character development of

the book was Elizabeth. She is not perfect and makes some poor decisions, but they are her decisions. She is starting to stand on her own and realize she needs to start taking her own counsel, as much as she loves her brother. Minuette continues to surprise me at every turn. She is bold, charming, and so smart. I love that she wants to be in the know of the political world and not shoved off to the side like every other female in this time. She is not stupid and she refuses to be treated as such because of the fact that she is a woman. I love her fire.

The plot continues to twist, unfold, and then refold in on itself. I love this. The constant feeling of betrayal, hidden motives, and treason are a staple in this story. You never know who is to be trusted and what everyone is angling for. I loved seeing an alternative version of events being played out. Certain people dying for a different reason than what they actually died for, I loved it.

I love reading about this time period. The dresses, the feasts, the travels, I love it all. There is something so seductive about the restraint between the sexes (for the most part). Everything is communicated with sidelong glances, a certain look in the eyes, body movements during a dance. I just can't get enough. It's not all out there like it is now. It was a constant dance of intrigue and suppressed sexuality. I love the game. There is a part of me that will always wish I was a player in the dangerous game of court intrigue in 1500s England.

This book is fantastic. It is an amazing follow-up to the incredible Boleyn King. I never wanted to leave this world. I wanted to stay with these characters long after the final page and it was quite a shock when I was finished to look around and not see 1555 England...sad day. This story is one that stays with you and I miss these characters already. I want more! I cannot WAIT to get my hands on The Boleyn Reckoning. Is it May 2014 yet!?

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Should You Read This? YES! If you love historical fiction, the Tudor era, or alternative versions of history, hell to the yes.

### **Erin says**

Find this and other reviews at: <http://flashlightcommentary.blogspot....>

They say confession is good for the soul so perhaps it's best that I just admit I've been avoiding this review. I've allowed Laura Andersen's The Boleyn Deceit to languish in my pending folder for months to circumvent penning what I knew would be somewhat negative commentary, but no more. It's time to bite the bullet and be done with it.

I realize I'm in the minority here, but I genuinely feel the second installment of Andersen's Boleyn Trilogy lacked the 'oomph' of its predecessor. I know sequels have a hard time of it, but I can't help looking back on this piece and wondering what the hell happened. Consider this your warning folks, there be spoilers ahead.

The love triangle Andersen carried through book one utterly stagnates in book two. It isn't until the final chapters that I felt tangible emotion or movement, at which point the affair felt entirely slapdash. Call me crazy, but I feel Andersen misstepped in neglecting the romantic subplot for so much of the narrative and overcompensated in her attempt to revive it in her build up to book three.

Having so enjoyed Andersen's interpretation of Elizabeth in *The Boleyn King*, I was bitterly disappointed to see her role much reduced in *The Boleyn Deceit*. I felt her the strongest of the four leads in Andersen's debut and was frustrated to witness her playing a less astute second fiddle to supporting characters like Dudley and Northumberland this go round.

William is fast becoming a carbon copy of his father which is something I found particularly frustrating. Andersen has the freedom to do anything she wants with this character and she chooses to create a doppelganger of Henry VIII. Creative? Inventive? Imaginative? I think not.

And while we're on the subject, let's talk about Alyce de Clare's unfortunate and untimely death. Were readers supposed to be shocked and surprised by the identity of her lover? I mean, it isn't as if poor Alyce is the only Tudor era courtier to take a tumble down a flight of stairs. I told myself from the start that the solution was too obvious to be correct, but no, there it was, staring up at me in prosaic black and white.

Bottom line, I felt the book rushed, disjointed, predictable and dull. There are moments involving Guildford Dudley, Mary Stuart, Francis Walsingham and Amy Dudley that I greatly enjoyed, but taken as a whole this piece left me disenchanted with the series and is proving a significant obstacle in my effort to rouse enthusiasm for book three.

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### **Kavita says**

I am aware this is more a rant than a review, but I had to do it to rid my system of this piece of shit called *Minuette*.

More appropriately titled *Minuette is Perfect*, this book is the second book in the *Boleyn King* trilogy. While the first book was good enough, and there was immense scope for a wonderful series, this book is terrible. There are a few good things. For example, the political intrigues are interesting and some of the actual historical characters like George and Jane Boleyn, Elizabeth, Robert Dudley are very well drawn. But because of Minuette's presence on every fucking page in the book, the story is spoilt beyond redemption.

So what's exactly wrong with the book?

#### *Minuette*

Ms Perfect is loved by everyone even though she is dull as dishwater. Every man she comes across falls in love with her, including the King himself. She is Elizabeth's best friend and can have her own way with her. As with the King. As with practically all the nice people. The nasty people hate her because they are nasty. That's the sole reason why they are nasty. She has bitchy thoughts about a lot of people but she is still a lovely, lovely person. She plays William, who has been her friend since childhood, for a sucker. But she is oh, so understanding and self-sacrificing. The entire burden of the kingdom is on her fragile shoulders and it is she and only she, who can find a way for William (who loves her) to marry a princess. She is never far from the thoughts of all the important people in the kingdom, including the King, the Princess Elizabeth and a Duke (Dominic). She is the most unimportant person in the story, but oh, everyone loves her so much that they rely on her for her wise counsel and for calming them during troubled times. Even when Minuette is hundreds of kilometers away from the action taking place in the story, she jumps into the page to spoil everything for the reader by means of letter, diary notations or merely just the thoughts of different characters. I DON'T WANT TO READ ABOUT FUCKING MINUETTE, AUTHOR! She is a disgusting

piece of shit who thinks too much of herself and should have been abandoned in some trash heap as a baby!  
AND SHE IS NOT IMPORTANT IN ANY WAY TO ANYONE OR TO THE STUPID STORY.

#### *Dominic*

The best friend of King William is better than Minuette, but only slightly. He is not just a Duke, he is also the only person William trusts completely. His main characteristics are: fierce loyalty, love for Minuette and looking dark and serious. Yes folks, this is the sum of his character attributes. No matter what the fuck happens, Dominic looks dark and serious. He does not want a position, nor is he ambitious in the slightest, not him! So you'd ask what on earth he's doing in the Tudor court, won't you? Well, you see, he is self sacrificing to the extent that he takes on all responsibility from William for the sole reason of putting him at ease. Never mind the fact that he is not self-sacrificing enough or loyal enough to either stop an affair with the woman the king loves or to let him know so they can reach a solution. After all, why would the King punish two such beloved and loving and amazing people for merely wuvvving each other so much?!

#### *Elizabeth, George & Jane Boleyn, Robert Dudley*

These people make it to the bad section not because they are badly drawn, but because they are so well characterized that the author did not deem it necessary for them to feature much in the story. Except where they can prop up dear Minuette in her perfection.

#### *Love triangle*

Blech! King William, Dominic and Minuette are in a love triangle. Only poor William has no clue about it and trusts his two 'best friends' implicitly. Both Minuette and Dominic go behind his back throughout the book and it is portrayed as oh, so deep love and friendship and concern for the kingdom. BULLSHIT! Two lying BASTARDS, who pretend and claw their way to power and act innocent, while William is made to look like some fool. URGHHH!!!!

I kept hoping the book would get better, because there are really some instances of good writing here and there. But I had it with the book when I read this: *Although Elizabeth herself was dressed in cloth-of-silver with a fortune in diamonds and pearls in her hair and around her neck and sewn to her gown, she knew that for once she did not match her friend for brilliance.* REALLY? REALLY, ANDERSON? Some jumped up chit of a girl who did not even exist can outshine ELIZABETH? Don't inflict this trash on us readers!

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#### **Jewel says**

3.5 stars

The second book in the Boleyn King trilogy, for some reason was not as good as the first one, but I still enjoyed it and want to read the third one.

I think it was the love triangle that bothered me, because I didn't feel anyone's feelings towards the other, and it did take a big part in the book.

As for the "what if" history, the book ends in 1555, William is still alive, is Mary ever going to be Queen? Northumberland is in the Tower, two years after the real Northumberland was supposed to be trailed and

executed. Guildford never married Jane Grey. Who is going to get Robert Dudley out of prison. What will happen to John Boleyn. And most importantly how will Elizabeth become Queen?

Elizabeth has always been a favorite character of mine, and I find myself wanting more of her in these books.

Much is given to Robert Dudley's character, how is it going to end for him.

I must admit, the ending of this book is making me want to start the third one quickly.

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## Caz says

You know how, sometimes, you finish a book and find yourself - quite literally - breathless?

Well, this was one of those times.

*ETA: I wish the publisher wouldn't use the comparisons to Weir and Gregory. This is **MUCH** better.*

## The Review

***The Boleyn Deceit*** picks up more or less where ***The Boleyn King*** left off and is, I have to say, even better than its predecessor. With William now king in his own right, the stakes are higher and friendships are going to be tested further than ever.

At the end of the previous book, William had prevented all-out war with France and arranged his betrothal to the young daughter of the King of France as a way of appeasing the Catholic faction in England. His friends Dominic and Minuette helped to avert a Catholic rebellion by discovering the whereabouts of a document purporting to prove that William was not his father's son. The document turned out to be a forgery, but the religious divide in England is as dangerous as ever with powerful families ranged against each other and ready to tip the country into civil war with little more than the slightest provocation.

Close to the end of the book, Dominic and Minuette had at last admitted the depth of their feelings for each other and had been about to seek William's permission to marry – when William dropped the bombshell that he loved Minuette and wanted to make her his queen. Knowing that William trusts very few of the people around him and that he needed them and their support at this difficult period in the early days of his reign, Dominic and Minuette opted to stay silent, believing that William would soon outgrow his infatuation.

By the time ***The Boleyn Deceit*** opens, however, that shows no sign of happening and people are starting to talk about William's marked preference for his childhood friend. The rumours have even reached the French court, where the king has the suspicion that Will is going to renege on his betrothal to the princess, an action which would also enrage the English Catholics.

Where the first book concentrated on the friendship of Will, Dominic, Elizabeth and Minuette, this one brings the romance to the fore with Minuette and Dominic desperately in love and unable to be together, and Elizabeth and Robert Dudley in a relationship that is just as frustrating, albeit for different reasons.

For Robert Dudley is married. And Elizabeth knows, deep down, that even had he not been, she would never have been allowed to marry him. I liked the picture Ms Andersen paints of Dudley – he's so often depicted as an evil schemer, out for his own ends – and while there's no doubt that he certainly *did* have an eye to the

main chance, it's made clear here that he's very much in love with Elizabeth (or as much as a man of his ilk can be in love with anyone). Elizabeth is terribly torn – knowing nothing can come of her fondness for Robert she is simultaneously annoyed with herself for falling for him and unable to resist his attentions. She's very much the Elizabeth we know – intelligent, learned and devoted to her country. Like Will, she has her father's temper, but unlike him, she is better at dissembling and able to see more clearly where her own desires are concerned.

Although it is clear that William is a very shrewd young man, well able to weigh his own decisions and to hold his own amid all the intrigues of the court, it's also apparent that he has inherited his father's talent for self-deception and his inability to see beyond his own desires when it comes to the woman he wants. Ms Andersen draws many parallels between William's desire for Minuette and his father's for Anne Boleyn, and the way that his desperation for one woman caused him to completely disregard the best interests of his country. His passion for Minuette is driving William along the same path and he is unwilling to give her up, believing that if he offers his sister's hand to Spain, the Catholics will be appeased and that everyone will accept Minuette because he wants them to. But his rashness and his inability to hide his feelings very quickly combine to make Minuette the subject of court gossip – and then worse, a target for those who wish to get the message to Will that she is not an acceptable choice for queen.

While William is the titular focus of the book, the real hero of the story is Dominic, now created Duke of Exeter. Courageous, honourable and fiercely loyal to those he loves, he's by nature reticent and unobtrusive, despite having been raised to one of the highest offices in the land. He's the one person Will knows will not flatter him and sometimes it falls to Dominic to say the things that nobody else will. But he hates the deception he and Minuette are having to perpetuate, a deception that seems in danger of tearing them apart. For me, their relationship was the heart of the novel, and I felt for Dominic especially, as he struggled to maintain his customary composure.

And the backdrop to all this is the constantly shifting, constantly hazardous world of sixteenth century court politics and intrigue which our characters must navigate. Will's uncle, the Duke of Rochford is now Lord Chancellor, and although his power has been somewhat lessened, he is still pulling the strings in the shadows. We are introduced to the man who will become known as Queen Elizabeth's Spymaster, Francis Walsingham, and also to John Dee, the astrologer and astronomer who also served as one of Elizabeth's personal advisors.

Minuette is still searching for the man who murdered her fellow lady-in-waiting, Alyce de Clare; Dominic is trying to guide and advise the young king, knowing all the while that he and Minuette are living on a knife-edge; the French king contemplates allying himself with the Scots in order to teach Will a lesson and unrest at home is fostered by some of the oldest families in the land.

Ms Andersen's meticulous research and her skill in weaving together the strands of reality and fiction sent me running to my history books on more than one occasion, because the action and events evolve so naturally and feel so completely plausible that I started to wonder which was which! I was very impressed indeed with the way she managed to preserve the integrity of certain events in her alternate version of history, and with the way in which the historical figures she employs in the story are still recognisable and very much the people we have come to know through the historical records.

Like *The Boleyn King*, *The Boleyn Deceit* ends on a nail-biter of a cliffhanger which left me howling and scrambling to the computer to check when the final book in the trilogy will be coming out (sometime in 2014). You don't have to have read the earlier book in order to enjoy this one, but I would strongly suggest doing so in order to familiarize oneself with all the different courtiers and characters.

Ms Andersen's writing is intelligent and well-paced, and all the characters – real and imagined – are well and consistently drawn. *The Boleyn Deceit* is a terrific read and one I have no hesitation in recommending most highly.

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### **Mary says**

The Boleyn Deceit is the second book in the trilogy written by Laura Anderson. It is an alternative history assuming Henry and Anne's son, William, survived to become king.

This installment picks up right where *The Boleyn King* ended. The four friends have tangled quite a web: William is in love with Minuette and has promised to marry her. Now, he doesn't really ask her if she also loves him but assumes that she would want to be queen. Dominic is also in love with Minuette and it turns out that she loves him back. Elizabeth, William's sister, is in love with a married man who may be a murderer. Added to these romantic entanglements are a lot of political intrigue and power plays. Almost everyone is trying to get ahead and is willing to set up their rivals to further their own prospects.

So, here's the deal, I gave TBD 4/5 stars. It's a good book. But...I think I got an ulcer reading this.

Minuette's position is so tenuous. She cares about William as they have been friends their entire lives. However, she recognizes that he is the king and being turned down by a woman isn't conceivable to him. So she and Dominic have to wait out this infatuation so that they can try to have a relationship that they both desire.

Dominic has to watch William fawn over Minuette while keeping his own emotions in check. He also learns that what the king wants, the king gets. Friendship might not protect you from the Tower.

Elizabeth is a smart woman. But, she does some really bone-headed things in this book. I had a hard time believing a few of these decisions as I thought she was more savvy than that.

William is the king. He does care for Minuette, Dominic and Elizabeth. However, his "Henry-ness" and "Anne-ness" worry me. I think he may have gotten the worst of both of them along with the best. This could be a disastrous combination.

My biggest frustration was that there are so many secrets. I know that it was probably that way (and still may be) but if they would have just TALKED TO each other and revealed what they knew, a lot of heartache (and probably a few lives) could've been saved. Have a conversation people! Whew, I feel better with that off my chest.

If you enjoy historical fiction, I highly recommend this series. Just keep a bottle of Tums nearby.

Thank you to the publisher for providing an E-ARC through Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Rachel Levy says**

So far this is an amazing series. I love the Tudor history and to put this into fiction as a "what if" plot is a wonderful idea. I really like the characters and how they flowed from the first book into this book. There is intrigue and suspense wrapped up in between such a great storyline.

While this of course does not follow history exactly, the author filled out history with many insights from the time period without obscuring history. And I think that is what I love so much about these books.

The author does a great job at putting you back into the period with vivid descriptions and the glamorous world of being at court. She has written the characters as such that you either love them or hate them. Either cheering them on or hoping one or two of them go to the tower to never be seen again. I have found myself immensely enjoying everything about this story.

Not every book does this for me but this trilogy certainly does. After finishing this book today I went and got the last book because this ended in a cliffhanger that I must finish.

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### **ALEXA says**

**FIRST THOUGHTS:** The tension is through the bloody roof right now!! But seriously, Andersen spins such a delicately crafted tale of subterfuge and emotion, once again drawing readers into the tempestuous, traitorous world of the Holy Quartet.

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### **Laurel Bradshaw says**

I am continuing to enjoy this series very much. As I think I said in my review of The Boleyn King, I wasn't sure I would like the alternate history angle, but it is very well done. The political background is familiar, but the characters are new, so you don't know from history what is going to happen. The Boleyn King was almost a coming of age story - William comes into his majority, but is still very much dependent on his circle of childhood friends, Minuette, Dominic, and his sister Elizabeth. The Boleyn Deceit takes on a somewhat darker character as William learns to exercise his power and is subject to the not-unfamiliar-to-us Tudor-style sense of entitlement and arrogance. Minuette has grown up and is no longer torn in her flirtations between William and Dominic. She loves Dominic, but William's love for her and determination to make her his wife puts her in a very precarious and dangerous position. The court intrigues around Mary and the Protestant/Catholic tension continues. William is negotiating marriage agreements with the French (to appease the Catholics) which he has no intentions of carrying out. Likewise, he is setting up negotiations with the Spanish King Philip for the hand of Elizabeth. Like the first novel, not much is resolved here, so the story is to be continued in The Boleyn Reckoning.

**Book Description:** The regency period is over and William Tudor, now King Henry IX, sits alone on the throne. But England must still contend with those who doubt his legitimacy, both in faraway lands and within his own family. To diffuse tensions and appease the Catholics, William is betrothed to a young princess from France, but still he has eyes for only his childhood friend Minuette, and court tongues are wagging. Even more scandalous—and dangerous, if discovered—is that Minuette's heart and soul belong to Dominic, William's best friend and trusted advisor. Minuette must walk a delicate balance between her two suitors, unable to confide in anyone, not even her friend Elizabeth, William's sister, who must contend with her own cleaved heart. In this irresistible tale, the secrets that everyone keeps are enough to change the course of an empire.

Series info:

### **Sue (Hollywood News Source) says**

Writing a proper review has always been my struggle, especially when a book has swept me off my feet. And this is one of those cases. It is a difficult review to write and, in my defense, a reader does not simply sum up all the intense emotions and thoughts a brilliant book inflicted and provoked in himself. So please forgive me if you don't find this review helpful at all.

The Boleyn King easily became one of my favorite debuts & books this year and when I discovered the sequel would also be published in 2013, I think I jumped and rejoiced only for a little. I can't believe I finished The Boleyn Deceit in one sitting. This girl can only say it's so addicting, this series would require your undivided attention.

The Boleyn Deceit picks up not long after the The Boleyn King ended. Andersen will throw you back to the glamorous and intriguing court of the Boleyn King instantly. I am so deeply submerged into the Tudor Era. I feel the magic of Laura Andersen's words. The Boleyn Deceit unfolds in such a riveting fashion that it ensures all of the readers undivided attention. The plot is so gripping, thoroughly well written, I enjoyed every twist and turn of the story. It is everything I hoped for. I devoured it entirely. I couldn't help myself but to finish it with one sitting.

The characters are likable and their continuing development is plausible. The romance will literally tear your heart apart and fill you with emotions. There are a lot of times I caught myself holding my breath. I found myself immensely enjoying everything about this book. The Boleyn Series managed to reduce me to tears once again. I am so engrossed with the story, it literally blew me away. It is such a pleasure to read an alternate historical fiction that holds so much love, sorrow, and depth.

The Boleyn Deceit intensified my hunger for this series even more. All I know is I wouldn't want this series to end. The Boleyn Deceit is a terrific sequel, that will have you on the edge of your seat. Fans wont be disappointed.

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Full review [here](#).

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### **Gaele says**

The second in a series of "alternate" reality history fictions, Anne Boleyn was able to deliver a male heir to her beheading-happy Henry VIII. While I hadn't read the first in this series, this story wasn't horribly difficult to understand, although some recurring characters and the odd faux-historical events will prove stumbling blocks for those familiar with their Tudors. I will admit that I am not a fan of the comparisons to works by Philippa Gregory, this author has managed to insert a wild premise into these stories, and it should be left to fans of historical fiction and alternate reality, and even those fans of historic romance to enjoy without comparison to any other authors.

Anderson has a smooth writing style, with plausible characters and displays the intrigues of court life in a realistic manner. Although a majority of the story seems to be dealing with the aftermath of Henry's dissolution of the Catholic church and installing the new Church of England, with William, seeking to ease tensions with an alliance and engagement to a Catholic French Princess.

William is now Henry VII, and his closest confidants are his sister Elizabeth, his childhood friend Dominic and his sister's confidant Minuette. What Elizabeth and Dominic don't realize is that William and Minuette are attracted to one another: a point that could cause great dissension in the inner circle. Even more interesting, Dominic is also attracted to Minuette, and she, being savvy and clever and familiar with the previous court machinations manages to do the delicate dance necessary to keep her suitors and mistress unaware of her intentions.

Court intrigues and love triangles, with all of the weight on William to marry for alliance when his heart lies elsewhere, the relationship between William and Elizabeth, and their individual romantic leanings are beautifully defined and described. Elizabeth's growth into a strong woman, as she revels in the courtship of Robert Dudley is possibly my favorite part of the story, seeing her potential growth and happiness while not carrying the weight of the crown, only slightly diminished by the realization of her position and that marrying for love may not be an option. Until William marries and produces a legitimate heir, she is still in the line of ascension, and her position is still tenuous.

While this book had some conclusions, all questions won't be answered until the last of the trilogy releases. A fast paced and very enjoyable story, you will have the best read with the firm decision to leave all Tudor knowledge behind. While fact does integrate and inform this fiction, it is most wholly a 'what if' story, and a very enjoyable one at that.

I received an eBook copy of the title from the publisher via Edelweiss for purpose of honest review. I was not compensated for this review: all conclusions are my own responsibility.

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### **Sarah says**

3.5 stars. Not as good as the first because it was a bit longer than it needed to be. Also a bit too much emphasis on the love triangle (and once again, not enough on Elizabeth, imo). But still enjoyable, with good, engaging writing and a good feel for the period and I'm going to continue on to the third book to wrap it all up.

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### **Morgan (The Bookish Beagle) says**

4.5 stars I am in love with this trilogy! It's astonishing to remember that William and Minuette and Dominic weren't real people. They are written so convincingly, with such passion and character, that they leap off the page and feel as wholly realized as Elizabeth or Henry VIII himself. I'm actually sad they aren't real! This reads like some of the finest historical fiction despite the alternate timeline; the period details and political machinations at court are as vivid and lifelike as the actual Tudor court. I love watching Elizabeth and Minuette and Dom and William interact with each other and with the court; they all bring different personalities to the table. And how twisty it is! I love digging underneath the layers of the mystery from The

Boleyn King; the two books are very connected and this one ends on just as much of a cliffhanger! Good thing I have The Boleyn Reckoning preordered already. I'm so anxious to see how it all turns out, especially without the "spoilers" of history to guide me! I was glad to see the return of Renaud and the introduction of both John Dee and Walsingham. Laura Andersen does a wonderful job of blending historical figures with her own creations. Highly recommended to fans of Tudor history; it's such a tantalizing what-if question with (so far) an interesting and convincing answer!

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