



Salvation

Harriet Steel

[Download now](#)

[Read Online ➔](#)

Salvation

Harriet Steel

Salvation Harriet Steel

It is 1586: plagued by religious strife at home and with the Royal Treasury almost exhausted, England holds her breath. When will Philip of Spain launch his Armada? In this world of suspicion and fear, three people - aspiring playwright, Tom Goodluck, his married lover, Meg Stuckton, and Huguenot refugee, Alexandre Lamotte, pursue their own struggles for happiness and salvation.

Salvation Details

Date : Published May 1st 2013 by FeedARead.com

ISBN : 9781782995418

Author : Harriet Steel

Format : Paperback 304 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction

 [Download Salvation ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Salvation ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Salvation Harriet Steel

From Reader Review **Salvation** for online ebook

E.L. Farris says

Harriet Steel's *Salvation* takes the reader from a small town in England to the filthy, sewer-laded streets of London, and even all the way to Paris, in this stellar work of historical fiction set in the late 16th Century. The main plot of *Salvation* consists of two "star-crossed lovers," Meg and Tom, who begin the novel engaged in an illicit love affair. Threatened with discovery, they independently escape and set off in opposite directions. Tom heads to London; Meg, to Plymouth, and while the outcome is not necessarily in doubt, Steel does a magnificent job weaving their travels together in a way that evokes the times quite realistically.

Or so I believe. As a history major, I've always regarded historical novels with a skeptical, even unwilling disposition. Indeed, I shy away from this genre because it's so hard for me to suspend disbelief. I didn't have to quiet my inner BS cop too much while reading *Salvation*. The details of Queen Elizabeth's era seemed reasonably, perhaps even perfectly, veritable. Even down to the grisly quartering of unlucky subjects, Steel paints the scene in a way that touches all five senses, which is to say that I could smell the farm animals and imagine all too well the blood dripping from the executioner's blade. Shiver.

And that's what I like best about Steel's writing. It brings you in and keeps you immersed in the thick of drama, even down to the traveling theatre Tom tries so hard to gain entry to as part of his dream to become a great playwright. And yes, he meets Marlow and a very young Shakespeare. I'd have been disappointed otherwise.

Steel also does a fine job piecing a very complex story line together. In less adept hands, her plot devices could have seemed pat. Although I occasionally wondered if she could have written things a different way, I really couldn't object to the series of events that led Tom and Meg from one place to another, and often doubling back again, until they find . . . well, I don't want to spoil the ending for you.

All in all, I give *Salvation* five stars. Excellent characterization carries this novel through a very complex story line.

E.L. Farris, AIA Reviewer

Liz Jackson says

Harriet Steel's *Salvation* is a historical work of fiction focusing on Elizabethan England in the 16th century. It follows the lives of two star-crossed lovers, Tom and Meg, who are separated through the scheming of Ralph, Tom's corrupt and greedy co-worker. Tom is threatened by Ralph and must flee, traveling to London and becoming involved in the world of theatre. There he encounters Alexandre, the owner of a theatre company and a refugee from France. Alexandre is mourning the death of his family in France due to their religious beliefs. He is also tied down to his commitment to dangerous work as a spy on behalf of Queen Elizabeth. Meanwhile, Meg's abusive husband is found dead, and Ralph blackmails her, using his knowledge of her affair with Tom to coerce her into his bed. This pushes her to run away and search for Tom, hoping to be reunited.

Some of my favorite elements of this novel included the references to Shakespearean theatre. The hints of theatre culture in England at that time were interspersed by cameos of the playwright himself. While I wouldn't say I'm an expert on Shakespeare, I thoroughly enjoyed the bits of history of which I was familiar that were tied into the storyline. The discussion of religious and political tensions of the time as they related to the lives and decisions of the characters was also fascinating.

The plotline kept moving well throughout the story. I found myself hoping that the characters would be able to have their desires fulfilled, groaning at the near-misses that occurred throughout the book, and wishing for a reuniting of Tom and Meg. I also hoped to see Alexandre free of his obligations to Walsingham and able to start a new future.

In this novel, one difficulty I had in relating to the characters was the lack of balance between good and evil: specifically, the "good" characters were all-good, and the "evil" characters were all-bad. However, this seems unrealistic, as it is human nature to have both positive and negative qualities. It also conflicted with the initial, negative impression I had of Tom and Meg's secretive love affair, conducted behind her husband's back. While the affair was explained away by the corrupt, evil nature of Meg's husband and the history of relationship stemming back to childhood between Tom and Meg, I still had qualms about supporting Tom and Meg's relationship fully throughout the story.

While I enjoyed the general plot, another drawback relates to the ending of the novel. While the characters progressed toward one another through the course of the book, the end wraps everything up neatly in just a few pages. I believe it may have been more compelling to spread out the final events of the end of the book, as it felt as though the important pieces all fell together so quickly.

Overall, I enjoyed this book and would most likely recommend it to fans of historical fiction or historical romance, specifically in the time period of Elizabethan England.

Evie Woolmore says

How historical does a historical novel have to be? From the dramatisation of facts and characters to stories simply set in the past, the challenge for any writer is to balance authenticity with narrative drive. It might be historically accurate but is it a good story? Harriet Steel's novel *Salvation*, set in the England of the first Queen Elizabeth, does a pretty good job of balancing these two aspects, and gives us a romance, a spy thriller, and a history lesson in one.

Tom Goodluck, a clerk with ambitions to be a playwright, is having an affair with Meg, a lady of reasonable wealth whose husband is thoroughly unpleasant. But when Tom's employer is found dead, Tom is charged with the murder and must leave the love of his life to save himself. Meg too is soon forced to run away and the novel is, in one sense, a weaving of their respective stories as they try to survive in the harsh social and religious realities of Elizabethan England. But Tom has also met Alexandre Lamotte, who not only puts on Tom's play in pre-Shakespearean London, but has a double life as a spy for the Queen's main agent Walsingham. Ms Steel uses the stories of these three main characters to show many complexities in England at that time: the persecution of the Catholics, the tensions between England and Spain, and the brutalities of being poor.

The novel is peopled with a large number of minor characters and it covers enormous ground geographically and in the passing of time. We are reminded of how long news took to travel in the sixteenth century, and

how violent that era was. There are a couple of quite brutal scenes which may make those of a tender disposition feel a little pale, but many would argue that it is the responsibility of a historical novelist not to shirk that responsibility. On that same point, for this reviewer there was perhaps a bit too much historical information at times: while Ms Steel's dialogue and description are extremely well crafted, there are quite a lot of descriptive passages, particularly in one historically significant section near the end (which I won't spoil by naming) and this is perhaps where the 'historical' overtakes the 'novel' at times. For in doing justice to Ms Steel's excellent research, the pace is sometimes slowed. Nonetheless, this is a really good read, and I couldn't help thinking at the end that it could have made an excellent first novel in a series featuring Tom and Lamotte.

Bookmuseuk says

Set in the late 1500s, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1, *Salvation* brings to life the sights, sounds and smells of Elizabethan England in evocative detail.

Aspiring playwright, Tom Goodluck is having an affair with the wealthy, and married, Meg Stuckton, but when Tom is charged with his employer's murder, he must flee both his hometown of Salisbury, and his love. Meg's husband discovers the affair, so she too, is forced to flee, and the narrative then follows the respective adventures of Tom and Meg as they struggle to survive the harsh realities of Elizabethan England. Tom meets the Huguenot spy for the Queen, Alexandre Lamotte, who puts on Tom's play, but leads them both into grave danger. Meanwhile, in an exciting fast-paced narrative, Meg struggles along her own journey fraught with danger and strife.

As with all good historical fiction, I enjoyed learning about Elizabethan times: the theatres and actors, the persecution of the Catholics, the tensions between England and Spain, and the brutalities of being poor. *Salvation* has everything: murder and spies, war and drama, illicit love and longing, and I would highly recommend this to lovers of good historical fiction.

Sarah says

My favorite part of this novel was the historical details and the world-building. Harriet Steel really knows how to bring Elizabethan England to life in all its magnificent glory. From the slums of London to the glitter of Elizabethan theater to the pastoral grace of the country to the decks of the ships defending English shores from the Spanish Armada, this author pours on the historical details in such a way that the reader experiences the setting, not just reading it.

The characters, for the most part, I really enjoyed as well. I think my favorite was Alexandre, with his struggle to re-build his life after the persecutions in France and all the while trying to re-pay Walshingham for his help in that escape by spying for him. I really felt for the man as he tried to open his heart again and really live, not just survive. Meg and Tom, once the story really got rolling, I enjoyed as well. But boy in the beginning, I wanted to slap these two more than once. They seemed to impulsively jump into action without any forethought at all. Maybe it was the immaturity of their characters when compared to Alexandre, but it took awhile for me to like them.

The pacing of the story was something else that struck me, in a good and bad way. Overall, the story flowed pretty smoothly with downtime in one storyline being balanced by action in another character's. Not once are you left with all three characters either waiting for something to happen or discussing stuff. However, the

balance of Tom's story individually was something else entirely. We go from a abrupt leave-taking at the beginning and starting a new life in London to sudden downtime in one location for almost the entire middle of the book and then a mad dash of activity towards the end. Maybe that's why his storyline, to me, was the most uninteresting...

This is a good historical fiction novel with some issues. Great historical details carry it, but some pacing and character issues seem to bog it down. At the end of the day, I enjoyed the read and the time I spent doing it. So I guess I'd recommend it to readers of this time period, but be aware that this book definitely isn't perfect.

Note: Book received via GoodReads FirstReads program for free in exchange for an honest review.

June (Kallandra) Kaye says

I received this book as a First Reads from Goodreads. Upon reading just the back cover at first, I was confused as to what the book would be about, but in time the story started to reveal itself.

It is basically about 3 main characters, 2 Meg and Tom who are involved with each other and Alexandre LaMotte who mentors Tom. I really liked reading the struggle Meg and Tom had to go through, in order to be together and yet throughout their time apart were at least sure of their own feelings for each other.

However, I would have looooved to read a bit more about how they had met each other and had first developed feelings. A bit more of their past would have helped get me more interested in how these two fared. The book started right after their one and only tryst and it felt a bit disjointed... I really wanted Tom and Meg to pull me along a bit more emotionally. One character I did not like very much is Bess. She did not seem that developed a character and rather seemed to just go along with anything told to her be it good or bad. I guess I just would have liked a more interesting secondary character rather than a whimpering simpleton. But that is not to say the story of all the characters struggles to keep themselves and hope alive, was not engrossing. I loved learning the turmoil each side of the religious struggles faced and how each character dealed with not just their romantic feelings, but with life in general. Overall I liked this book.

Tahlia Newland says

Salvation is the moving story of woman, Meg, and a man, Tom, who lived in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth the first. Meg, married off by her parents to a man she can never love, has a lover, her childhood sweetheart, Tom, but Ralph, an unsavoury character finds out and bribes Tom to leave town. If he doesn't, Ralph will tell Meg's husband, a rich and powerful man, and neither Meg nor Tom's life will be worth living. When Tom's employer is found murdered and Tom gone, the police assume that Tom committed the murder and so begins a tale that takes the reader on a vivid journey through life in 16th century London set against the backdrop of the threat of Spanish invasion.

It's a story with many unpredictable turns, and so riveting that I truly couldn't put it down. Meg leaves her husband and, along with her maid, sets out to find Tom. Her journey takes her from a life of luxury to that of a washer woman, and many things in between. Tom ends up in prison and if it weren't for the owner of a theatre that befriended him, he would have rotted in Newgate. The theatre owner is a great character and one

of the rare people that show kindness to either Tom or Meg. I'll not say more about the story, except that it's brilliant and it hangs on the question of whether Tom and Meg will ever manage to find each other. The plot and pacing are impeccable. The characterisation strong and the prose engaging.

Steel takes us right into the era. We can smell the smells, taste the flavours, feel the rough clothes against our skin and see all too clearly the brutality of the time. Her descriptions of the public executions were horrific and the possibility that that could happen to Tom provided a powerful tension. The reliance of women on men for protection and provisions was strikingly obvious and the story certainly made this reader grateful for the developments in women's rights in the modern world.

I received this book free of charge from the author in return for an honest review. 5 stars.

Liza Perrat says

Set in the late 1500s, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1, *Salvation* brings to life the sights, sounds and smells of Elizabethan England in evocative detail.

Aspiring playwright, Tom Goodluck is having an affair with the wealthy, and married, Meg Stuckton, but when Tom is charged with his employer's murder, he must flee both his hometown of Salisbury, and his love. Meg's husband discovers the affair, so she too, is forced to flee, and the narrative then follows the respective adventures of Tom and Meg as they struggle to survive the harsh realities of Elizabethan England. Tom meets the Huguenot spy for the Queen, Alexandre Lamotte, who puts on Tom's play, but leads them both into grave danger. Meanwhile, in an exciting fast-paced narrative, Meg struggles along her own journey fraught with danger and strife.

As with all good historical fiction, I enjoyed learning about Elizabethan times: the theatres and actors, the persecution of the Catholics, the tensions between England and Spain, and the brutalities of being poor. *Salvation* has everything: murder and spies, war and drama, illicit love and longing, and I would highly recommend this to lovers of good historical fiction.

Melinda says

Originally posted on The Book Musings

Salvation is a historical fiction set in 16th century England under the reign of the first Queen of Elizabeth, during the time when there was tension between England and Spain. This is also the backdrop of the story as a lot of historical relevance to what happened is described in this novel.

Meg Stuckton is married off by her parents to an older rich man instead of the man she wanted to marry, Tom Goodluck, who she now has an affair with. Tom's colleague Ralph, who doesn't seem to like Tom for professional reasons, wants Tom gone. To his advantage, Ralph knows about his affair with Meg and threatens to use it against him if he doesn't leave so Ralph can get what he wants. This poses problems for both him and Meg. As Tom leaves Salisbury to protect Meg's reputation, his employer are found dead in his house... the same evening he was at the house and because Tom ran away, the police assumes he had something to do with it. It also doesn't count in his favor that his friend, who he helped back to the house, can testify that Tom was there that evening and will now be charged with murder.

Tom meets Alexandre Lamotte who he ends up working for as a playwright, but Lamotte is also a spy for a man called Walsingham – who works for the Queen. During the time that he is working at the theater, Tom gets arrested for the murder on his boss, for which he will be executed. With the help of Lamotte, he finds himself ‘comfortable’ in prison from which he later escapes. Meanwhile, Meg left her husband and took her maid with her to warn Tom, but little did she know that during the time she was looking for him, he was in prison. I kept reading towards whether they will find each other again, because at one point they almost did...

The non-romance-novel reader in me was surprised at how much I wanted to know if Meg and Tom will see each other again and I was a bit upset when both of them, respectively, decided to “give up” because they were convinced the other forgot about them. Meg was a strong character, I liked that she was able to handle her “downfall” as lady of the mansion to a normal woman who does others’ washing. She handled it with grace. There are parts of the novel I didn’t enjoy reading and that was the violence, such as the descriptions of public executions, and I found that there was so much historical detail that it overshadowed what I wanted to read more about – Meg and Tom. Harriet Steel’s research on 16th century England was obviously well done, there is lots of historical detail in the story and I’m pretty sure that if you love reading about that period, you will enjoy reading this book.

Jo Barton says

Elizabethan England, in the latter part of the 1500s, is expertly and graphically portrayed in this exciting story of illicit love and turbulent emotions.

Aspiring playwright, Tom Goodluck is totally enamoured with his married lover Meg Stuckton, however, when dangerous circumstances prevent the lovers from being together, the only way Tom can survive is to flee his home town of Salisbury. Heading for the excitement of London, Tom soon becomes involved in a series of adventures which will ultimately lead him to his heart’s desire, which is, involvement in the exciting world of the London stage. Caught up in the drama of the Elizabethan theatre, Tom meets the enigmatic Huguenot, Alexandre Lamotte, whose penchant for espionage and danger, will lead both men into the very heart of court subterfuge. Meanwhile, Meg has her own journey to endure before she can take her rightful place in Elizabethan society.

The story literally thrives on excitement, from the rural domesticity of sixteenth century Salisbury, to the magic and mayhem of the glorious city of London, there is never a let-up in the narrative. The diverse characters, which flit into and out of the story, are reminiscent of a richly embroidered tapestry, each adding their own little splash of colour to the finished work, and, as the sights, sounds and smells of Elizabethan England are brought to life in glorious detail, the whisper of danger never seems very far away.

The story is professionally finished to a very high standard; there is fine attention to detail and enough twists and turns in the narrative to keep the most erudite of readers entertained.

I have no hesitation in recommending this book as an exciting romp through the hurly-burly of Elizabethan England, when plots and counter plots were the order of the day, and where hidden danger lurked around every corner.

Reviewed on behalf of Historical Novel Society Indie Reviews

Lucy says

This book I got out as an impulse for the cutthroat book challenge and I found it alright. You know those contemporary books where it's a little like a soap opera drama with car crashes and people getting pregnant and relationships having to survive outside conflicts? Well, *Salvation* is like that but set in Elizabethan times. I really liked how such dramas were put into historical context, especially with religion, but I wasn't such a fan of the two main characters. They were fairly weak and useless to me, though I was happy at the ending.

This book was just blah for me and I found it dragging a little in the middle. 2.5 stars!
