



The Tudor Throne

Brandy Purdy

[Download now](#)

[Read Online ➔](#)

The Tudor Throne

Brandy Purdy

The Tudor Throne Brandy Purdy

In the wake of King Henry VIII's death, England's throne is left in a precarious state—as is the peculiar relationship between his two daughters. Mary, the elder, once treasured, had been declared a bastard in favor of her flame-haired half-sister, Elizabeth, born of the doomed Anne Boleyn. Yet the bond between the sisters was palpable from the start. Now reinstated, Mary eventually assumes her place as queen. But as Mary's religious zeal evolves into a reign of terror, young Elizabeth gains the people's favor. Gripped by a tormenting paranoia, Mary is soon convinced that her beloved Elizabeth is in fact her worst enemy. And the virginal Elizabeth, whose true love is her country, must defy her tyrannical sister to make way for a new era.

..

A brilliant portrait of the rule of "Bloody Mary" and her intricate relationship with Elizabeth I, the adored "Virgin Queen," here is a riveting tale of one family's sordid and extraordinary chapter in the pages of history.

The Tudor Throne Details

Date : Published July 1st 2011 by Kensington (first published 2011)

ISBN : 9780758255747

Author : Brandy Purdy

Format : Paperback 376 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, English History, Tudor Period, European Literature, British Literature

 [Download The Tudor Throne ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Tudor Throne ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Tudor Throne Brandy Purdy

From Reader Review The Tudor Throne for online ebook

Nan Hawthorne says

My regular readers know I have strict standards where first person narrative is concerned. I believe it should only be used if the voice can reveal more than the usual narrative style can. I have reviewed books that were at best lackluster and at worst clumsy because of inappropriate use of first person. This book, like at least one other of Brandy's three, uses first person in a skillful, effective way.

After a narrative prologue depicting the death of the great King Henry VIII the novel splits into two voices, is daughters Mary's and Elizabeth's. The tale starts with the three children, the girls and their brother the new king Edward VI at their father's deathbed. From the very start the two distinctive voices not only are easy to identify, but also tell much the same story but with different minds analyzing events.

We follow both girls through their brother's short reign, living with the young boy's imperial behavior and often fickle affections. The sisters are still fond of each other at this point, but a scandal involving Elizabeth and Thomas Seymour threatens to destroy that. Mary clings desperately to a spinsterish Catholicism while Elizabeth, her own woman, nevertheless learns one more lesson in not trusting men to have power over her.

When Edward dies Mary takes the throne. Though Elizabeth has done nothing to earn it, she distrusts her younger sister, convinced there are plots to dethrone her. Purdy shows Mary trying at first to return Roman Catholicism to its preeminence in England through her confidence that "the people" wanted it, then through gentler efforts, but when it becomes a bargaining chip in her marriage to Philip of Spain, her zeal takes its famous "Bloody" turn. Elizabeth can only hang on, playing the game as best she can, until, some day, her older sister dies without issue.

It is both satisfying and enlightening to watch Mary reach out for love in the wrong place, to watch her health, both physical and mental, deteriorate and to see what impact a monarch who is desperate and going mad is on her people. At the same time, the smarter more reflective Elizabeth learns hard lessons that will ultimately make her a glorious queen, perhaps the best monarch England has ever had. Purdy's skill in bringing these two women and others in their world to life demonstrates great skill as a novelist, one that deserves more notice than she got with her earlier novels.

If you are a reader of Tudor novels who relishes the catwalk of the women's and even the men's fashions of the day, you will adore this novel. It seems that every time someone comes on the scene, you get a top to toe description of what she is wearing. The author clearly relishes the Tudor court's finery and knows enough to describe it faithfully.

For me the history, the speculative peeks behind the scenes, and more than anything the sensitive exploration of the two women's emotional development is the attraction for this novel that I fully anticipate will take its place as one of the best loved and respected novels in the genre of Tudor-era historical fiction.

First published in That's All She Read <http://allsheread.blogspot.com> .

Michelle says

I'm a big fan of Tudor era novels...usually. There were some excellent portrayals in this novel, like the characterization of the two sisters' beliefs and how they saw the world through varied lenses, that made it compelling at times. I had to admire Elizabeth's love for England and pity Mary for being fooled by Prince Philip into thinking she actually meant something to him. What a sad thing to say in your last days... "All I ever wanted was to be loved." The portrayal of their differences when it came to England's salvation or ruin was compelling too. So many people died needlessly and with such cruelty done to them for worshiping God in their own way. Many people were persecuted for their faith in those days and it always saddens me when leaders crush their own people for reasons such as this.

Now on to the stuff I didn't like. I had a hard time buying all of the sexual stuff. The cakes and ale guy was annoying and disgusting. I don't know if what he had done in this story actually happened to Elizabeth in real life, but if it had then he was even more of a scum than this story portrays. The way this was written reminded me of a Middle Ages version of *Lolita* and that sordid tale. Ick is all I have to say about that.

If the editor had cut the explicit sex scenes that didn't add to the story but made it seem cheap, then this novel would have ranked higher in my mind. The author has a real knack for writing the first person point of view. It's clearly her strength. But adding so much erotic content to make it feel like a lewd novel with modernized debased behavior in the story left a lot to be desired for me. Thankfully that wasn't the entire book.

Sometimes I'd be reading along and think the story was a great portrayal of history, then something nasty or erotic happened and I lost my enthusiasm for the story. This is a great example of how explicit sexual content in a book can ruin it for me. The three star rating is for the parts of the story that were insightful and in good taste. The rest...ick. That's my two cents.

Kim says

[What I liked most about the book was the relationship between Mary and Elizabeth. These are two very complex women, so naturally, their relationship would be very complex too. You have the love that they held for each other.

Kari says

Henry VIII is dead. His own children sat in his chamber and watched him die. Now, his young son, Edward, is promptly named king, though he has little to do with any ruling. Mary and Elizabeth are both put aside, though Mary begins to fear for her life as she is still a practicing Catholic during her brother's Protestant reign. Edward's health is decent at its best, and he begins to have problems shortly after ascending the throne. At his death, Mary becomes queen and begins her quest to save her sister from scandal and her Protestant ways.

Mary and Elizabeth seem to switch roles towards the end of this book. Elizabeth is seen as a reckless child, a youth who does what she will regardless of the consequences. Mary is devoted to her God and her religion above all else, even when the threat of death hangs over her when her brother declares no other religion should be practiced but his father's Protestantism. After a barely concealed scandal between a young 13-year-old Elizabeth and a thirty-something Thomas Seymour, Elizabeth swears off love of anything other than her country. Mary, a few years later, after being shown a portrait of a man, swears off love of anything other

than him and God {although, I must say, I think she would swear off God for him}.

I got this book in a Goodreads giveaway and I really enjoyed it, although sometimes it was a tad difficult to follow. It went back and forth between Mary and Elizabeth, every other chapter taking the point of view of the other woman. Sometimes I honestly got confused why Mary would be talking about her lover, and then realized it was the next chapter and was in fact Elizabeth. Although, honestly that was only a little hindering in the reading. The love scenes between young Elizabeth and Thomas Seymour were more on the disturbing side, although it was honestly difficult to remember he wasn't just a young man following his lust instead of reason {he is written much like an idiot, actually}.

The author did a good job capturing my attention and holding it. While it did take me a while to read it {I have a lot on my "to-read" list}, I really enjoyed it. If you like any of Phillipa Gregory's Tudor books, you would probably like this one. Its a bit of an easier read than hers, and just as captivating.

Shawna Scott says

This is the first book I read from Brandy Purdy and I enjoyed it very much. It reads to me something like what the Tudors: the Next Generation might have hopefully been something like if there was a continuing series of the Tudors. I felt bad for Edward VI, the boy-king who didn't have long to live, I pitied Mary I, even through all the terrible things she had done throughout her brief rule over England, because let's face it, Mary had many terrible things done to her almost her whole life, being torn from her mother in adolescence, even her own father, King Henry VIII had wronged her.

And then there were many people who wanted her dead, and out of the way because of her staunch Catholicism. If such hate and fear is all you know, then it could turn you into a monster if it breaks you, like it did to Mary. Not even her husband, Prince Phillip of Spain could love her in the end. But I found him to be very unlikable anyway, unlikable like the foolish and arrogant (not to mention perverted) Thomas Seymour. He sexually abused Elizabeth during her adolescence (EW). They say that he was desperate for more power than he actually had, and he would have done just about anything to get it, even attempting to kidnap King Edward VI, which of course, he was executed for.

My favorite of the last Tudors was always Queen Elizabeth I, even though she only gets around to her turn at the throne in the last chapter. Yes, even she was known to have been very ruthless in history, but in this novel, with her every triumph against all the odds, even being sent to the Tower by her own half-sister, I, like the common people of England, couldn't help but root for Elizabeth all the way. Historical inaccuracies also abound, which prevented me from giving this book 5 stars, but it is only historical fiction after all.

Spencer Jones says

I've been a Tudor fan since I was 12 during a visit to Hampton Court Palace. I recently turned 31, and the infatuation remains strong as ever.

I'm halfway through my second reading of "The Tudor Throne"- it's that damn good. Purdy has a knack for details, though its overdone in places, especially when describing clothing. I think her interpretation of Mary and Elizabeth is quite accurate; theirs was a relationship that alternated between being loving and

tumultuous, and the reason for the discord actually had to do with circumstances, past and present, beyond their control.

The tribulations of Mary's life make her cling to her religion with unshakable devotion- she's quick to demonize those on the "other side" (Protestants) for their fanaticism, while failing to notice her own. She was very much a woman of her day, and I'm sure if she'd been born after The Church of England was established, she would have been just as passionately Protestant. Unfortunately, her inflexibility mitigates against her- she never quite masters the idea of tolerance as Elizabeth does.

The fact that Elizabeth even makes it to the throne at all is something of a miracle, as she had three (I'm counting Lady Jane Grey) in line ahead of her. She learns, as Purdy beautifully lays out, that there is a game to be played at the Tudor court, and that one must learn to play it quickly and well. Elizabeth observes how the prominent women in her life, to include her sister, are treated by the men around them, and wisely, decides never to fully trust any man. Of the two sisters, she is endowed with the most temperance and common sense.

I think that since Elizabeth had the more successful reign, authors are more inclined to depict her in a positive light. So far, I haven't seen many works of fiction extend the same to Mary, as her good qualities were overshadowed by the burnings she ordered during her reign. Purdy's is the most balanced portrayal of Mary I have seen in fiction outside of "The Queen's Fool" by Phillipa Gregory. There's probably a degree of sexism at play here- she was hardly the first monarch to order heretics to be burned at the stake, yet that seems to be the aspect of her life that is most magnified by Tudor fans and historians alike. In truth, I think she was a complex and deeply misunderstood woman, and I can't really fault her for her jealousy, resentment and fury in light of what she endured.

Purdy does justice to the other characters as well. She portrays Thomas Seymour exactly as I believe he was- handsome and charming on the one hand, but also sickeningly ambitious and a predator. His scenes with Elizabeth were well written, but cringe worthy, and that's kind of the point.

Five stars, for sure! I look forward to reading more books by this author!

Siobian says

King Henry VIII has just died and though his son is the next in line, everyone knows Edward won't make "old bones." That leaves Henry's daughters, Catholic Mary and Protestant Elizabeth, left to rule. Both have been disinherited at one point by the king, but now both stand to take the throne. Slowly, Mary and Elizabeth's relationship begins to fray as rumors about Elizabeth's personal life begin to spread and Mary's paranoia begins to rise. When Mary becomes Queen, she swears to bring England back to the true religion and begins burning heretics at the stake. Her upset subjects start looking to Elizabeth to save them which makes Mary's paranoia that Elizabeth is plotting to take over the throne become worse and threaten to destroy them both.

Though I have read many books about both Elizabeth and Mary, this is the first time I've read a story quite like this. Purdy focuses on both characters, but has their relationship take front stage many times. I thought it was very interesting to see how each of their lives affected their friendship as sisters and look at it from that point of view, rather than solely focusing on each of their reigns. Mary also comes across as a sympathetic character many times, rather than the religious fanatic bent on destroying her people as she is frequently

portrayed. I really enjoyed seeing Purdy's unique spin on this well-told story and was very disappointed when it ended. Not because I didn't like the ending, but because I wanted the story to keep going! I hope that the author is planning to write more about Elizabeth in future books, because she came across as such a great character. Though the chapters rotate between Mary and Elizabeth's separate points of view, I was never confused and thought the story moved very smoothly. Overall, I loved reading this book and recommend it to anyone looking for a different telling of Mary and Elizabeth's story.

*Please note, I received a copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

Bookaholics says

The Tudor Throne by Brandy Purdy

Historical Novel- June 28th, 2011

4 stars

Mary Tudor has watched Elizabeth grow up and took care of her after Elizabeth's mother, Anne Boleyn, fell out of favor by their father (the King of England) and was executed. But after their father's death, these two half-sisters grew further and further apart, each with a different viewpoint on England's future and destiny. When the next king, their little brother Edward, passes away and Mary ascends to the throne, it becomes clear that England will come between these two sisters forever...

This is definitely NOT a romance novel. This book is all about these two sisters and how their experiences with love shapes and torments them. Elizabeth was around thirteen years old when she was pursued by Thomas Seymour, her stepmother's new husband, who was a lecherous and ambitious jerk that sees Elizabeth as a stepping stone to kingship. Scarred by her girlish infatuation with Thomas, Elizabeth learns that she must never trust men and must instead rely on herself. Mary, desperately seeking love, fell in love with Prince Felipe of Spain. By then, she was already 37. Shallow and cruel, Prince Felipe treated Mary shabbily, but blinded by love, Mary squandered England's goodwill and eventually died of sickness.

This was a well written novel; I like that the novel was told by two first-person narrators. One of the chapters is written from Elizabeth's viewpoint and in her voice, and the next chapter is by Mary. By alternating, you can see the differences in their viewpoints and feel the growing chasm between the two of them. One lives for her country and looks forward to the future, the other is trapped in the past, unable to move beyond the trauma of her parents' divorce.

Sad and introspective, the Tudor Throne is highly recommended for those who love to read about Tudor era.

Reviewed by Pauline from the Bookaholics Romance Club

Katherine Gilraine says

We all know the struggle between the Queen Mary and her half-sister, who would later become Elizabeth I.

We've seen what unfolded. But to read it in an interchanging first-person narrative was interesting and quite engaging.

I've been a fan of historical fiction for a while, but so far, I think I like Brandy Purdy's characterization of Elizabeth best. While we have all seen what happened through her life, seen the historical record, Purdy's narrative through Elizabeth's eyes tells the story of a young woman who had to learn caution early, and have it tested repeatedly. We know she survived and what she had become, and what she had done for England, but Brandy Purdy shows it from the heroine's own perspective.

Purdy's Mary Tudor shines as well, though we know her history as well as we know her sister's. Practical psychology and history blend and intertwine as Purdy's Mary tells her own story, in her own perspective.

Kathleen Kelly says

The Tudor Throne by Brandy Purdy is another take on the history of England after the death of Henry VIII and his son Edward VI. The story is basically about Queen Mary and Princess Elizabeth, told in alternating chapters. Queen Mary is the daughter of King Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, while Princess Elizabeth is the daughter of Henry VIII and Queen Anne Boleyn. There always was animosity between the two sisters. Mary's reign was successful at first as she pardoned those who were loyal to her and the Catholic religion. She always managed to find a way to keep Elizabeth out of the limelight as Mary knew that the people of England did favor Elizabeth. Mary decides that she needs to marry and she sets her sights on Phillip, Prince of Spain especially after she sees a full portrait of him. She finds herself in love but the English population were not happy with the thought of Spain being in a position of power in the Tudor court. But Phillip does agree to marry Mary and after the marriage, Mary becomes so obsessed with having a baby that there comes a time that she really believes that she is pregnant, but as months go by and she goes way past the due date, it becomes apparent to those around her that this was not so. Mary became bitter after many failed pregnancies. She was determined to restore England to the Catholic faith and to secure her throne from Protestant threats, and as a result she had many Protestants burnt at the stake thus earning her the name Bloody Mary. There were many plots to have Mary removed from the throne and to make Elizabeth queen. Elizabeth had spent time in various prisons including the Tower of London because Mary was afraid to have her at court, out of sight out of mind so to speak. Elizabeth's ascension to the throne was not an easy one, when young she was involved in a scandal with Thomas Seymour, the husband of her father's last wife Catherine Parr. There was a trial but nothing was proven but she was sent away by Catherine, more than likely to protect her from her husband. Then there was the plot of Thomas Wyatt to overthrow Mary and put Elizabeth on the throne. She was then imprisoned in the Tower of London but was released due to lack of proof and was sent to the country where she stayed until Mary's death. At the age of 25 Elizabeth became queen. This book was one I hated to put down and I did enjoy it. Just a bit different than other fictional accounts of these two great women of English history. If you are a Tudor fan, you may just want to add this book to your bookshelf...

Kelsey says

Henry VIII has died and on his death bed he knows that his son Edward, son of Jane Seymour, is not strong enough to rule and will be himself ruled by the sixteen men appointed to guide him until he is old enough to take the throne but he fears that if Mary, daughter of his first wife Katherine of Aragon, becomes queen all will be lost. His one true regret is that Elizabeth (Bess), daughter of Anne Boleyn, wasn't a boy. He knows

she has what it takes to rule but since she is a girl and third in line to the throne, he knows there is no hope that she will be queen.

After the death of Edward, Mary and Bess embark on a battle for the crown. Even though Mary had basically raised Bess like a daughter she knows that she is also her biggest enemy. Bess is truly beloved by the people and Mary knows that. Bess is also the reason that Mary's husband –to-be, Philip, says he won't come over. Until she is gone he doesn't feel safe, or so that was what Mary is told.

Both ladies have a very different view on how the kingdom should be ruled as does their advisors. There were times that your heart just breaks for Mary and her quest for love turns her into a sniveling weak minded woman. She was one who definitely let her emotions rule. Elizabeth's approach was quite different but started the same. Her love of Thomas Seymour destroyed her also but in the wake made her stronger and more determined never to let emotions rule her. Her heart hardened and she vowed to never let anyone see her weaknesses.

At first I was unsure about how I was going to like the chapters written in Mary's POV and then in Elizabeth's POV. I truly enjoyed having both viewpoints put forth for me and they are mainly focused on how each woman felt at this moment or that moment. We are swept from the death bed of Henry VIII all the ways through Bloody Mary's rule and end up with the Virgin Queen taking her rightly place on the throne.

I highly recommend *The Tudor Throne* for all those historical fiction fans of the Tudor Era.

Lisa Yarde says

The sisters Mary and Elizabeth, heirs of Henry VIII's English empire, endure a tragic battle of wit and will in Brandy Purdy's *The Tudor Throne*. As the daughter of the Spanish Catholic queen Catherine of Aragon, Mary has inherited her mother's dour and devout nature. Elizabeth, only child of Anne Boleyn, is spirited like her mother, a source of painful memories for Mary. Both women knew happiness in earlier times as the darlings of their father and have witnessed Henry's subsequent abandonment of their mothers in pursuit of other women. Despite their commonalities and a series of shared tragedies, distinct differences in personality will not allow Mary and Elizabeth to trust each other for long.

The novel opens with the death of their father, leaving them to an uncertain future. The only assurance each has is that their younger brother, Edward, will inherit the throne as the son of Henry's third wife. His courtiers, including the rapacious Edward and Thomas Seymour, want to ensure their ascendancy and keep England out of the sphere of Catholic influence. As a Protestant, Elizabeth holds similar beliefs. Mary fears for the future of her country and thinks any path but Catholicism will lead to England's ruin. The sisters each discover how dangerous the Seymour men can be, as Thomas tries to entangle both in his schemes. Elizabeth pays the harshest price with her reputation constantly questioned by everyone, including Mary.

The sudden death of King Edward throws the kingdom into chaos. Factions at court put a bewildered Jane Grey on the throne for a short time, ignoring Mary's claim as elder sister. When Mary finally ascends, she faces hard choices that imperil the lives of those whom she once claimed to care for, including Elizabeth. Although Elizabeth appears to submit, her defiant nature will allow her to give up the dream of claiming the throne for herself one day.

The relationship between Mary and Elizabeth is fraught with tension, deception and missed opportunities.

Mary's portrayal as a woman with natural affection for her family, including her siblings of half-blood, gives way to her religious fanaticism. Still, she is sympathetic as a woman shunned by her father, his court and even her husband in later years. Her slow descent into paranoid fear and judgment is heartbreaking.

Elizabeth shines as a vivacious young woman and while her later experiences are painful life lessons, she appears less sympathetic for her willful disregard of how much trouble her actions can cause. There are a few instances where she deliberately provokes Mary that suggests too much youthful recklessness. Still, at her heart, she is devoted to her people and country, ultimately willing to put their interests first.

I would recommend *The Tudor Throne* for lovers of historical fiction in the Tudor period. Those who have ready Ms. Purdy's previous titles in the same era will enjoy a chance for new perspective on old characters, and learn about new ones.

Allie says

A Father shapes the destiny of his children, a King shapes the destiny of his kingdom. Henry VIII shaped both. As Henry VIII laid on his deathbed attended by his wife Katherine Parr and his three children, the world waited. Henry, speaking in riddles, talks to his three children. Edward, the small weakhearted prince; Mary, the Proud Princess; and Elizabeth, the princess who should have been a prince. After Henry's passing, Edward with his Protectors assume the throne. Unfortunately, Edward is a cheap imitation of his father, and is not the King England longs for. During his reign, Elizabeth retreats to Chelsea, and Mary retreats to her own estates and faith. This would be a vital time period for both future Queens. Mary, angering Edward that she will turn to the reformed faith, stays from court. When she does make a rare appearance at court, she is shunned with all her papal finery. Elizabeth, living with her step-mother, Katherine Parr, falls in love with the scheming Thomas Seymour. A torrid love affair ensues, and threatens Elizabeth's future. Fortunately, Anne Boleyn's daughter realizes the trouble that comes along with Thomas Seymour and escapes from his greedy clutches before it's too late. But Elizabeth's reputation is damaged, and it seems that everyone is looking down on her. Soon, the tides change, and it is discovered that Edward is dying. Once again, all of England is watching as the young king decides on a heir. Will it be his heretical sister Mary, or the malleable Jane Grey, his cousin? England descends into chaos as it becomes a battle of wills between Mary and the Duke of Northumberland. Eventually, Mary wins and ascends to the throne. Mary begins her reign as Merciful Mary releasing political prisoners and mending the rifts in England. Along this time, Elizabeth is once again in hot water over the Wyatt Rebellion, resulting in her imprisonment and house arrest. But the virgin queen needs a husband to beget an heir. She turns to her mother's native land and her cousin, Phillip II. This sparks much outrage all over England. But Mary persists, and wins this battle once again. Phillip comes to court and is a presumptuous, cocky man who lusts after himself and other ladies, including Elizabeth. As Mary ages, and deals with her false pregnancies, she becomes more erratic and fanatical. Merciful Mary becomes Bloody Mary very quickly. The book ends with Mary dying and Elizabeth ascending to the throne.

I received this book from the author Brandy Purdy. This book is very well written, and very detailed. The colors of dresses, hair and etc, are all very vivid. Brandy did take liberties with some details, but these are details that have been debated. I loved being able to see the world through both sister's eyes. It was remarkable. I came to understand Mary better, as well as Elizabeth.

Highly recommended.

This book is scheduled to be released June 28th. It is available in the UK as *Mary & Elizabeth* by Emily Purdy. Pre-order this book now. You'll want to read it!

<http://themusingsofabookjunkie.blogspot.com>

Kimberly says

[I received this novel from the author as a review copy for my blog Historical Fiction Obsession.]

Over the past several years I have read many books dealing with the Tudors. Most of them have dealt with Anne Boleyn or Elizabeth Tudor, and a few have been about Henry VIII's other five wives, his sisters, and his daughter Mary. *THE TUDOR THRONE*, however, is the first Tudor novel that I have read that gives both Mary and Elizabeth Tudor's point of view together, following their father's death. All of the books that I have read about Elizabeth have mentioned Mary or even had Mary play a large part in the book, or included Elizabeth in a book about Mary, but never have I read a book that placed equal importance on both Mary and Elizabeth's point of views. The novel was written as a first person account of their lives, so the chapters alternated between Mary's point of view and Elizabeth's. Although I have read their stories a hundred times from a hundred different books, it was still a terrific novel that held my interest until the end.

Switching back and forth between the sister's perspectives enables the reader to really get to know both Mary and Elizabeth. Their fears and insecurities come to light in a way that only a first person narrative can provide. Both women were deeply affected by their father's treatment of their mothers, and of women in general. Any future relationships with the opposite sex are indirectly tainted by their father's treatment of women. Both Mary and Elizabeth are frightened of and desperate for love. Mary is desperate to find the love she lost from her father for so many years when she was young. She easily succumbs to Philip of Spain's half-hearted courtship of her, and although she is the Queen of England, she allows him to rule her, as well as her country. After taking care of herself, guarding her emotions, and having no one to lean on for so long she is more than willing to put her life and love into Philip's hands, though he is no way worth it.

Elizabeth turns out much differently when it comes to love and trust. Rather than throw everything away for love and companionship as her sister did, she puts up a wall around her that is impossible to penetrate. She refuses to end up like her mother, or any of the other women that her father loved passionately, only to discard when bored, angry, or seeking an heir. Elizabeth, unlike Mary, refuses to rely on anyone, especially a man. She wants to be her own woman, and to make decisions for herself and for her country. Years of sadness and loneliness had weakened Mary's resolve, but it had strengthened Elizabeth's. While both women were talented and extremely intelligent, it will forever be Elizabeth who stands out in people's minds because of the idea of womanly strength and power that she stood for.

I would recommend this book to any reader who enjoys Tudor history. While Ms. Purdy did take creative license when it came to several parts of the book, it was still a well researched Tudor novel. I was impressed by what a quick and easy read it was. There was never a dull moment, and I was able to transport myself to Mary and Elizabeth's Tudor England every time I opened the book. The fact that it was written in first person, from both women's perspectives, (both before and after becoming Queen of England) added to the enjoyment and excitement of this fascinating novel of historical fiction.

I without a doubt give this book five out of five stars!

Shoshanah says

While I always enjoy reading new historical fiction, at times it feels like I've read so much on the Tudor reign that it's difficult to read more. Not that I don't still enjoy that time period, but more that there are so many different ways one can reread the same basic story.

The Tudor Throne starts at the ends of Henry VIII's reign, and continues through both Edward VI's and Mary's reign. It's told from both Mary's and Elizabeth's points of view in alternating chapters, which means while I might have liked the story to continue through Elizabeth's reign, the fact that Mary's story would have to end means it would no longer be the same book.

It's interesting as I've read more from this period how I can pick out historical details and see how the author used them to their advantage. For example, we know that the order to Katherine Parr's arrest was dropped, and since someone found it she was able to go to the King and apologize, and thus was never actually arrested. But no one knows who actually found the note and warned the Queen. Here Purdy uses that story to show Elizabeth's loyalty to her stepmother as she is the one in the book who does this act.

One thing that stood out to me in the book is how almost bawdy it is. I think we read about the past Queens & Kings and expect them to act with the decorum befitting royalty today. And while I think they did act above the average person, I don't believe their behavior, if seen today, would come off as exactly dignified. That's not to say the characters come off as common in the book, but more some of the scenes and behaviors are almost lewd, in a way similar to what you'd find at a Renaissance Faire today.

Overall I did enjoy the book. I believe I've read books from this time period from Mary's & Elizabeth's points of view individually, but not necessarily within the same book. I do think that if this is a time period you're interested in, but haven't read a lot about, these books could be a great introduction to the story.

Disclosure: I was provided this book from the author for review. All opinions expressed are my own.
