



The White Princess (The Plantagenet and Tudor Novels)

By Philippa Gregory

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From “queen of royal fiction” (*USA TODAY*) Philippa Gregory comes this instant *New York Times* bestseller that tells the story of the remarkable Elizabeth of York, daughter of the White Queen, and mother to the House of Tudor.

When Henry Tudor picks up the crown of England from the mud of Bosworth field, he knows he must marry the princess of the enemy house—Elizabeth of York—to unify a country divided by war for nearly two decades.

But his bride is still in love with his slain enemy, Richard III—and her mother and half of England dream of a missing heir, sent into the unknown by the White Queen. While the new monarchy can win power, it cannot win hearts in an England that plots for the triumphant return of the House of York.

Henry’s greatest fear is that somewhere a prince is waiting to invade and reclaim the throne. When a young man who would be king leads his army and invades England, Elizabeth has to choose between the new husband she is coming to love and the boy who claims to be her beloved lost brother: the rose of York come home at last.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Guest Review of *The White Princess*

By Tracy Chevalier



Tracy Chevalier is the *New York Times* best-selling author of *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. She was born in Washington, DC but has lived in England all her adult life, and now has dual citizenship. A graduate of the English program at Oberlin College, Ohio, with an MA in creative writing from the University of East Anglia, Norwich, England, she was a reference book editor before turning to writing full-time. She lives in London with her husband and son.

How do you solve a problem like the Princes in the Tower? What does a historical novelist do with Edward and Richard, heirs to the British throne who were purportedly locked in the Tower by their uncle and then disappeared so that he could become Richard III? Conspiracy theories have flourished for centuries, but no strong evidence has emerged to solve the mystery. A novelist has any number of possibilities to pursue.

In *The White Queen*, the novel that chronologically precedes *The White Princess*, Philippa Gregory makes her choice and places their fate in the hands of their feisty mother, Elizabeth Woodville, wife of Edward IV and a key player in the War of the Roses, the dynastic feud among the Plantagenets between the Houses of York and Lancaster. She substitutes a pauper for young Richard, ensuring that the Duke of York gets away. The follow-up to such a dramatic decision inevitably needs to continue this story line. Richard has disappeared. Does he come back?

At first, *The White Princess* seems to tell another story – that of Elizabeth of York, the White Queen's daughter, and one-time mistress of Richard III, who on his death becomes the wife of his slayer, the Tudor

Henry VII. (Confused yet? I am still reeling at the thought that she was mistress to her uncle!) Elizabeth is the embodiment of the painful transition between York and Tudor monarchies, her strategic marriage to Henry VII the outward expression of York loyalty as demanded by the Tudors.

Gregory is known for her retakes on British royal history, viewing the scheming, the power struggles, the battles exclusively from women's points of view, exploring how the Queen or Princess finds her own source of power and influence in the interstices left open by the men. Elizabeth of York is no different, using her beauty, her popularity with the people, her instinctive wiliness and political acumen to bear on Henry VII, with varying results. She may pragmatically have to accept that the Tudors are in the ascendance, but she can see that her distant and paranoid husband is not a natural as a king; she must teach him how to win the love and respect of his subjects, who still view the family of York with affection and nostalgia.

Eventually Elizabeth and Henry achieve a kind of marital truce, and grow to love each other, if only for a time. There are plenty of beddings, of ladies-in-waiting with knowing looks, of confinements and wet nurses and babies – including, of course, the future Henry VIII, characterized by Gregory even in his boyhood as a sensualist.

Inevitably, however, *The White Princess* is still the story of men, and specifically of the spectre of the lost princes. Does lost Prince Richard return in the form of pretender to the throne Perkin Warbeck (referred to in the novel most often simply as “the boy”)? Gregory places his identity in Elizabeth's hands, demonstrating the impossible position she is in: acknowledge the boy as her true brother and bring down her husband and any possibility that her sons might become King, or deny him and see her possible brother executed for treason. In this impossible situation, Elizabeth must tread carefully, and Gregory does an expert job of maintaining this tricky balancing act to the very end. Relishing the personality clashes and political machinations of an insecure Tudor court, she makes the current British royal family, with its crystal-clear line of succession, seem very dull indeed.

From [Booklist](#)

Gregory charts the vicissitudes of a high-stakes political marriage in her latest diverting epic. It's 1485; the Wars of the Roses have ended, but the victorious Henry VII sits insecurely on his throne. Still mourning her lover, Richard III, Princess Elizabeth of York must wed King Henry to unite their warring houses. Unlike his predecessors, Henry has no personal charm, and the novel excels at depicting his paranoia as royal pretenders pop up and threaten England's stability. Kept ignorant of the political scheming around her and caught between her York relations and securing her children's inheritance, Elizabeth can't match the dynamism of her mother, Elizabeth Woodville (*The White Queen*, 2009), or mother-in-law, Margaret Beaufort (*The Red Queen*, 2010), and they occasionally steal the spotlight. Nonetheless, the younger Elizabeth is an observant narrator, and her difficult position reflects historical reality, as does her growing closeness to her beleaguered husband. The repetitive language will either drive points home for readers or drive them batty, but the novel is as replete with intrigue and heartrending drama as Gregory's fans expect. -- Sarah Johnson

Review

"Loyalties are torn, paranoia festers and you can almost hear the bray of royal trumpets as the period springs to life. It's a bloody irresistible read." (*People Magazine*)

"Bring on the blood, sex and tears! . . . You name it, it's all here." (*USA Today*)

"This rich tapestry brings to vivid life the court of Henry and Elizabeth. Meticulously drawn characters with a seamless blending of historical fact and fiction combine in a page-turning epic of a story. Tudor-fiction

fans can never get enough, and they will snap this one up.” (*Library Journal (starred review)*)

"*The White Princess* features one of the more intriguing theories about the possible fate of the princes." (*The Washington Post*)

"This is the most fascinating and complex of the series--not only in history, but in the psychological makeup of the characters, the politics of the era and the blending of actual and reimagined history. Gregory makes everything come to life. . . . This is why Gregory is a queen of the genre." (*Romantic Times*)

“As usual, Gregory delivers a spellbinding . . . exposé.” (*Kirkus Reviews*)

“Elizabeth must navigate the treacherous waters of marriage, maternity, and mutiny in an age better at betrayal than childbirth. . . . At this novel’s core lies a political marriage seen in all its complexity.” (*Publishers Weekly*)

"Replete with intrigue and heartrending drama." (*Booklist*)

“Gregory returns with another sister act. The result: her best novel in years.” (*USA Today*)

“Gregory delivers another vivid and satisfying novel of court intrigue, revenge, and superstition. Gregory’s many fans as well as readers who enjoy lush, evocative writing, vividly drawn characters, and fascinating history told from a woman’s point of view will love her latest work.” (*Library Journal*)

“Gregory is one of historical fiction’s superstars, and *The Kingmaker’s Daughter* shows why . . . providing intelligent escape, a trip through time to a dangerous past.” (*Historical Novels Review (Editor's Choice Review)*)

“Wielding magic again in her latest War of the Roses novel . . . Gregory demonstrates the passion and skill that has made her the queen of English historical fiction....Gregory portrays spirited women at odds with powerful men, endowing distant historical events with drama, and figures long dead or invented with real-life flaws and grand emotions. She makes history . . . come alive for readers.” (*Publishers Weekly (starred review)*)

“Gregory ... always delivers the goods.” (*New York Post*)

“Gorgeous fun.” (*New York Daily News*)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Robin Martz:

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