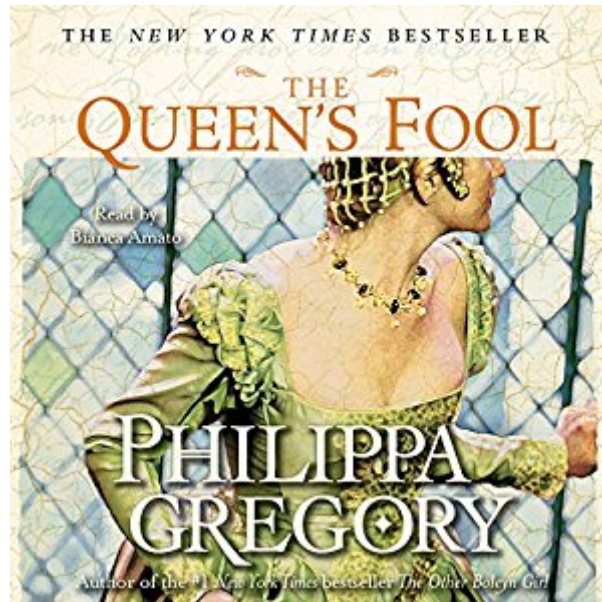




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The Queen's Fool



Synopsis

A young woman caught in the rivalry between Queen Mary and her half sister, Elizabeth, must find her true destiny amid treason, poisonous rivalries, loss of faith, and unrequited love. It is winter, 1553. Pursued by the Inquisition, Hannah Green, a 14-year-old Jewish girl, is forced to flee Spain with her father. But Hannah is no ordinary refugee. Her gift of "Sight", the ability to foresee the future, is priceless in the troubled times of the Tudor court. Hannah is adopted by the glamorous Robert Dudley, the charismatic son of King Edward's protector, who brings her to court as a "holy fool" for Queen Mary and, ultimately, Queen Elizabeth. Hired as a fool but working as a spy; promised in wedlock but in love with her master; endangered by the laws against heresy, treason, and witchcraft, Hannah must choose between the safe life of a commoner and the dangerous intrigues of the royal family that are inextricably bound up in her own yearnings and desires. Teeming with vibrant period detail and peopled by characters seamlessly woven into the sweeping tapestry of history, *The Queen's Fool* is another rich and emotionally resonant gem from this wonderful storyteller.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I like the whole "Tudor" series for its characterizations and views into what that court and lifestyle was like. However, this one is my favorite. It's a view from someone who must hide in full view; a total alien to the courtly lifestyle who must figure out which alliances to keep, and which secrets, to preserve her life as she becomes increasingly part of this new world. The author makes it clear how

difficult it was to be Jewish in Tudor England; even before the focus on doctrine given by the reformation it was a life of defense and hiding. And, the author uses that to show us what the court would be like, and how one would get swept up into it, as a basically normal person trying to get by. I found it very interesting.

What a fascinating story of a young girl *immigrating* escaping the Spanish Inquisition! This poignant portrait of the beloved only child of a Spanish bookseller quickly envelopes the reader into Tudor England and then Gallic France where her father and betrothed escape when England is thrown into turmoil as the Catholic Mary ascends the throne. The hardships she endures, the tough choices she is forced to make and her life as a secret Jew make a delicious read. I love Philippa Gregory's writing. I got a great deal through one of the many book clubs I subscribe to (BookBub, Sweet Deals, etc.). If you're a passionate reader belonging to a club saves you hundreds of \$ if you're okay with e-reading.

I have read almost everything this author has written about England during the Middle Ages. This novel did not seem to have been as popular as some of her other books. I bought it because I was running out of her books to read ! What a pleasant surprise- I think it is one of her best ! If you are a Philippa Gregory fan or a fan of this genre, don't miss this book !

Caught in the political turmoil of the sixteenth century, when England was bitterly divided by religious differences, and "heretics" and traitors to the "cause" were liberally burned or beheaded, a young girl witnesses court life up close. Living in fear as a secret Jew converted to Christianity, Hannah is blackmailed into becoming a spy for the powerful Dudley family. Blessed with the gift of foretelling, she becomes young King Edward's Holy Fool, and, after his death, is passed into the household of his sister, Queen Mary, to continue her spying as the Queen's Fool. She is engaged to her cousin, an attractive and clever physician, while simultaneously falling for her blackmailer, Lord Dudley. To make matters even more complicated, she becomes an ardent fan of both Royal women, Queen Mary and Princess Elizabeth, both of whom she is spying upon: Queen Mary for Robert Dudley and Princess Elizabeth for Queen Mary. I loved Gregory's "The Other Boleyn Girl", but cannot rate this book in the same category. While the author writes well, this story gets bogged down in minutiae and too much liberty is taken with the actual historical characters. The words that come out of Queen Mary, Robert Dudley, or Princess Elizabeth just do not ring true. They sound like the author's imaginary projections, not the actual words. The dialogue lacks the authenticity of the

historical details plastered all over the text and often interfering in the flow of the real story. Hannah's relationship with her cousin and betrothed is well done. You can feel the passion slowly developing. In some way perhaps this book would have been better giving that relationship more attention rather than occasional updates. If you enjoy historical novels during this era, I recommend *Figures in Silk* by Vanora Bennett, a story set during the reign of Charles II that focuses on the growth of the Silk trade and court life. Like Hannah, the main character is a fictional woman, a doctor, and like Hannah, striving to create a place for herself in this male-dominated society. The story is faster-paced, yet the historical events well portrayed.

Philippa Gregory does a terrific job of putting you in a historical era with real characters caught up in a great yarn. It is that wonderful combination of being a page turner and yet being able to put it down for a while and pick it up and get thrust right back into the tale. She both entertains and educates. I love that!

Hannah is no fool but I wondered why she would return to Bloody Mary after Mary told her even she, Hannah, would name names to root out heresy. The main character of *Hannah Verde* ne Green Carpenter is fictional and the most entertaining in the series. Hannah is a long disguised Jew who at first, doubted her faith. I found the background of her exile from Spain during the Inquisition to be thoughtfully portrayed. Her mother was burned at the stake. Hannah and her father, a printer, scholar and book seller made it to England where they believed they were safe from the fires. She ended up begged as a Holy Fool to young King Edward by Robert Dudley. Her time disguised as a boy was a fun insertion and her dislike of gowns and ridiculous high heels something women can identify with today. Of course she has a love interest and exciting times when she and her family flee England to Calais, the last English land on French soil. I hope we will have a follow up book to continue Hannah's story...as the ending makes a fine point to begin the next story. I also like the royalty in the background as seen through Hannah...a needed change. Overall, my favorite Tudor book.

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