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White Queen



Synopsis

Brother turns on brother. The throne of England is at stake. The deadly Wars of the Roses have begun.... They ruled England before the Tudors, and now internationally best-selling author Philippa Gregory brings the Plantagenets to life through the dramatic and intimate stories of the secret players: the indomitable women. Elizabeth Woodville, a woman of extraordinary beauty and ambition, secretly marries the newly crowned boy king of England. While she rises to the demands of her exalted position and fights for the success of her family, her two sons become the central figures in a famous unsolved mystery that has confounded historians for centuries: the lost princes in the Tower of London. Philippa Gregory brings the artistry and intellect of a master writer and storyteller to a new era in history and begins what is sure to be another best-selling classic series.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Okay, I admit it. I like the bodice-ripper approach to writing history. It's a lot more interesting than the battle-to-battle descriptions that constituted most of my college history studies. I'm an English history buff, and I've usually found the Wars of the Roses rather, well, tedious to plow through (much less to understand). Shakespeare's six plays on the subject are even more challenging to decipher (at least for the modern reader). Philippa Gregory has recognized a vacuum and she's done an entertaining job of filling it. White Queen is one of three novels about the Wars; they're noteworthy because each is told from the perspective of one woman (one a queen, one the mother of a future king, one the daughter of one of the major players in the whole convoluted struggle).

Does Ms. Gregory take liberties with history? Well, since most of these women probably wrote little or nothing of their experiences and feelings, almost certainly she is speculating. But she does so in such a way as to (a) entertain the reader; and (b) tell the extremely complicated story of the struggle for the English throne that dominated the 15th Century. Mad kings! Scheming queens! Perfidious "kingmakers"! And that's only the beginning.

This was the first I've read by Philippa Gregory. (Yes, really!) I enjoyed the glimpse back into fifteenth century England a lot. This is the first book in Gregory's Cousin's War series, known to history buffs as the War of the Roses. This is also the first book I've read set in that time period, and Gregory successfully drew me back five and a half centuries. What a fascinating and tumultuous time during England's history. The viewpoint character is Elizabeth Woodville, who became Queen of England when she married Edward IV. I became absorbed in Elizabeth's life and that of her mother, and their fascinating blend of Christianity and witchcraft. Were they really like that? I don't know, but Gregory certainly convinced me. My only complaint is there were several longish passages of exposition where the viewpoint character relayed historical events in an almost textbook-like fashion -- albeit an interesting textbook! -- and I found myself skimming to get to the next time Something Happened. I absolutely loved the section dealing with the Princes in the Tower. Elizabeth was the mother of those princes, so we get to know them through a mother's eyes. Gregory does not buy into the commonly held notion that they were murdered by their uncle, Richard III. In high school English class I wrote a term paper on the subject, and I agree with her. She states her case convincingly. Even with the long passages of History Telling, I enjoyed the book enough that I bought the second in the series.

I enjoyed this read in the fact that it truly exemplifies the lengths families would go through to maintain their hold on the crown.... Quite astonishing. I didn't know much about the War of The Roses, so I enjoyed learning more about what it was all about, even though the author clearly states at the end that there is less fact in this book than her others (due to lack of records from that time period). I didn't really feel like it picked up until close to the end, though, and definitely didn't feel like there was much resolution. I'm not really interested in reading the next book in the series, The Red Queen, based on the reviews I've seen on , so it looks like the series will end here for me. Bummer!

This is a good account of the manipulations a woman who would have to live if she was the Queen and she wanted her husband to remain King in the time of Edward and Richard. Things were not

always civil. There were jealous murderous plots from people who believed they had the least bit of chance of being king or queen. This is a novel about such a family. It is fiction but it could be very close to what actually happened. It is hard to put the book down once you start to read it! It is very well written. ENJOY!

Depending on the list, this is listed as the third or Second novel in the 'Plantagenet and Tudor' Novels. I found this book to be an interesting read, as it revolves around a central figure in the Wars of the Roses, Elizabeth Woodville (Also spelled Wydville in some historical texts). It was a wonderful novel to read, and the historical insight, such as fashion, architecture, is somewhat evident in Gregory's work.

The TV show has to be better than the book. Very little done in the way of personal interaction between characters. Emotions are flat and unrealistic. Why would a young king fall for a widowed commoner? Was she really that beautiful? No clue is really given. Story is written as a boring narrative...we did this or they did that. This story only evoked irritation in this reader. I couldn't make myself finish it.

I saw the TV series a while back and really enjoyed it. I finally got to read it!! This book, I read from the author, is mainly factual, but is injected with conclusions she had to infer when little historical record was available. It also has a fantasy component to it: the white queen was a descendant of the goddess of water. Shush, it is good! There is plenty scheming, plotting, and warring among the families contesting right to the English crown. That was pretty interesting. I particularly enjoyed the description of all the formalities surrounding the lives of the royal family of the time (late 1400s). All in all, good reading.

Great job of telling history while weaving in some fiction. Through reading all of the novels about the Cousins' War, I finally understand who was who and how it all happened. Queen Elizabeth (Woodville) has been villified in much of history for using trickery to snag her husband. However, this book takes a more updated view of her. She was disliked by most of the court because they thought she was not royal by birth. She led a fascinating life.

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