



The Twylight Tower

Karen Harper

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It is May 1560. As sinister storm clouds gather overhead, twenty-six-year-old Queen Elizabeth dispatches William Cecil, her most trusted adviser, to Scotland for crucial negotiations. Handsome, ambitious Lord Robert Dudley is at her side. But their leisurely midsummer idyll is cut short when the court's master lutenist plunges to his death from a parapet beneath the queen's window. The loyal retainers of Elizabeth's privy council do not accept the official verdict of accidental death. Their fears are borne out when another tragedy rocks the realm, and points the way to a conspiracy to bring down Elizabeth and seize the throne. As ill winds of treachery swirl around the court, and suspicion falls on those within Elizabeth's intimate circle, a vengeful enemy slips from the shadows...a traitorous usurper who would be sovereign.

With *The Twylight Tower*, Karen Harper brings a legendary era to life, drawing us into an intoxicating world of majesty and mayhem, political intrigue and adventure...where danger is everywhere...and where a young queen journeys to greatness in the long shadow of her bloodstained past.

The Twylight Tower Details

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From Reader Review The Twylight Tower for online ebook

Cheryl says

Murder mystery set in Elizabethan England. Queen Elizabeth and her privy council loose one of their number when the court master lutenist plunges to his death from a castle parapet. Elizabeth is surrounded by people, who is friend, who is foe. In this installment of the Elizabeth I Mystery series the queen has fallen in love with Robert Dudley. A very dangerous political move for the queen. In the book the author puts forth a theory about Dudley's wife Amy's death. S

Joanne says

was so excited when i found out i could get the rest of this series i started years ago!! then got this one and reread my synopsis of the 1st two to get reacquainted and found out it wasn't impressed and wasn't going to finish it!! going to finish it out , not a total waste but not worth any more of the series when there are sooooooooooooo many GREAT books to do!!!

Carla says

And it's more of the same. Another murder that seems to have nothing to do with the queen and in the end it has everything to do with her. Once again the characters are far away of what they could be, especially Elizabeth who becomes more annoying (and I doubted that it was possible), her relationship with Robert Dudley, which could bring something more to the story, is nothing more than tepid. The other characters, which I think were more interesting, as Meg, are almost absent in this book and the development of their stories didn't bring anything special to the story.

It's all very predictable and I think the main character is so obnoxious that I couldn't care if the killer could reach her or not. I expected more from this series but it was a real disappointment so, after a brief glance over the other volumes I have, I think I'm done with this series.

Bacongirl says

First and foremost, this was a totally fun read, which was all I was looking for. Mysteries with a historical element are always a good time. In this book, which I believe is the 3rd of a series, Queen Elizabeth I, with the help of some of her servants and advisors, solves murders that are committed in her realm. During the course of the story, the author presents an interesting scenario of how one historical figure might have died. I found most of the characters to be well developed and lively, especially the character of Meg, the queen's herb girl. I will definitely pick up the next book of the series to find out what happens to her-- and probably the first book, to see how the author accomplished the setup. Very entertaining.

Moonmomie says

I'm biased because I adore this particular genre and time period, and I thoroughly enjoyed this entire series of books by Karen Harper. They are written very similarly to Fiona Buckley's Ursula Blanchard Mysteries.... almost confusingly so. This series focuses on Queen Elizabeth I, herself, solving the murders of her subjects. Absolutely fictitious activities frequent the books (Elizabeth leaving the castle in disguise to chase down clues and criminals). But, this is why it is Historical "Fiction". Although not historically accurate, they did hold my interest with their depth of character, plot, and historical abundance.

Denise says

The continuing sagas of Queen Elizabeth I--leader of a group of murder sleuths in the mid 16th century. The latest case involves the death of the Royal Lute player, followed quickly by the cousin of a court noble. Both had died from fall-related accidents. Everyone is suspect, everyone is considered capable of cold-blooded murder for various reasons. A new character is introduced ("Dr. Dee"-astrologer, bibliophile, philosopher and possible warlock). Everyone suspects everyone else. Another cliffhanger in Merry Olde England!

Marfita says

I had read about the mysterious death of Amy Dudley before many years ago. Her husband, the Favorite of a relatively young Queen Elizabeth I, was implicated (and the queen herself by association) although Amy was terminally ill and not expected to live long anyway. It was thought Dudley was in a hurry to be single that he might marry Elizabeth. He pressed for an impartial investigation of his wife's death and it was ruled an accident, although the stigma of suspicion plagued him the rest of his life.

Harper proposes an intriguing alternative scenario. I found the use of songs/poetry as clues really annoying, although this was otherwise a successfully unique mystery. While for the most part, the plot and subplots of this book resist being trite, the need for something more definite to link the "mastermind" to the murder (and Harper shows us the murder) results in something I found silly and ham-handed.

Silliness: that Elizabeth and her mostly servants would be sleuths ... together; that you can use poetry as clues (sorry, as much as I love poetry and as likely as the importance of it in communication in that time was, it just comes off as silly to me); Elizabeth in Love (she must have been, but I'd rather read about the silly sleuthing instead).

Brilliance: The Queen is in a realistically precarious political position that makes her tyranny and seeming arbitrariness perfectly understandable. Harper has done a very good job conveying this.

General note: if kings knew what problems their *droit de seigneur* would cause their (relatively) legitimate heirs they might *perhaps* consider keeping their codpiece tied shut (but I doubt it).

Carmen says

Set during the time when Robert Dudley was in high favor, this book is a bit different than the first two in the series. Queen Elizabeth does less of the sleuthing in this one and reacts to her courtiers researching more. Amy Dudley dies of a fall down the stairs and a suggestion of how it was done is presented in this book.

graveyardgremlin (formerly faeriemyst) says

I had a very hard time getting through this book. First of all, Elizabeth annoyed the heck out of me. She was very wishy-washy; either she was b!tchy or she was on the verge of tears. Seriously, she's a queen and she needed to be somewhere in the middle most of the time, not at two extremes all the time. Secondly, the relationship between Elizabeth and Robert Dudley didn't add anything to the story and I'd rather there were less of it. I know that there is truth to the relationship, but the way it is written in this book, it doesn't make for a good read. Three, the whole book was rather boring. The characters I had liked in the previous two were hardly in this entry much, and the author made Meg do some stupid things. I think I'd like the whole concept of the book if it had been written in someone else's eyes instead of the focus being through the Queen's eyes. Most especially if it were either William Cecil or the fictional Meg, because there would be more of a leeway of how to write Elizabeth and it would be from a distance. Fourth on my list... The same tired old plot is rather redundant. Someone's in a conspiracy to knock Elizabeth off the throne. *yawn* Couldn't there be a normal murder or mystery instead? It's already been used to death (no pun intended) in just three books! Of course the Queen wouldn't be interested because it has nothing to do with her, therefore every book in the series must be about offing her! Ugh-and-a-half!

I really don't know if I'll pick up the fourth in the series or just drop it. I would like to know what happens with Meg, but I'll have to think about it.

2 stars

Cera says

A perfectly servicable mystery novel, although (as with Harper's other novels) a little light on the real mystery. Harper takes the risk of letting her main character be off her game for a lot of the novel, which to some extent made things interesting, but I did eventually get tired of it & was glad when that was resolved.

This is the novel that deals with Amy Robsart's death, and although I don't buy Harper's version for a second, it was a good read, and she admits at the end that she started from what's historically known & made things up from there, which is perfectly acceptable.

I doubt I'll reread this, but it was a nice brain-relaxer.

Leane says

This is the third book in the Elizabeth I mystery series by Karen Harper. I think this series is absolutely fantastic and I read the books over and over. Compared to the first two in the series, this book is not as exciting. The plot is very predictable and few historical events are embedded into the book. The story really gets into the relationship between Robert Dudley and Elizabeth, as well as the mysterious death of Dudley's wife, Amy. Harper does a great job of telling the story of Amy's death and fitting it in with the story that she wanted to tell. In the first two books, I fell in love with Elizabeth. She is so spunky and spirited. However in this book I feel like the reader loses her to Dudley, which is maybe what Harper was going for when she

wrote it. It is very disheartening since she is the best character. I look forward to continue reading the fourth book in the series and compare it to the rest of the series.

Linda ZINGARO says

First in a mystery series set in Elizabethan England. It was easy quick reading and I did enjoy it but not nearly as good as the Justin De Quincy mystery series by Sharon Kay Penman and C J Sansom's Shardlake series.

Jody says

Several people close to Queen Elizabeth have died. Who knows if they are accidents or murder? Elizabeth and her Privy Plot Council work to find out the truth. Is someone close the Elizabeth at fault? I truly enjoy the books in this series about Queen Elizabeth the 1st. This book mixes history and mystery in a fiction book, something I always appreciate.

Christie says

First sentence: "The queen knew a storm was coming, but it wasn't going to halt her necessary duty."

Elizabeth I has been on the throne for almost 2 years and these have been most uneventful as far as mysteries and threats to her life go. Now, however, the conflict between William Cecil and Robert Dudley for most trusted councilor is coming to a head. Then, the queen's beloved lutenist dies and a new mystery is afoot.

This I think is one of the best installments in this series so far. I think mainly because it ends with one of the greatest mysteries of the real Elizabeth's reign (view spoiler). This is the first book in the series that really begins to discuss the relationship between Elizabeth and Robert. The mystery keeps you guessing, but drops many hints. I also liked the fact that the murderer gets to tell their own side of the story in this book. It gives another perspective and I hope this continues through the rest of the series. My only issue with the book is that the Privy Plot Council does not get as much page time as previous books.

Kelly says

Better than the first two in the series because it was a real mystery based on history and not just the author's imagination. The scandal of Elizabeth I and her Master of the Horse Robert Dudley was huge. It was talked about all throughout Europe and the time and still today. Even more so of a scandal was the death of Amy Dudley. In all the books I have read on the subject I have never come across conclusive evidence on what exactly happened. I'm sure that this isn't what really happened by a long shot, but it made for interesting fictional reading.
