

[PDF] Queen's Own Fool (Turtleback School & Library Binding Edition) (Stuart Quartet)

Jane Yolen, Robert Harris - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Queen's Own Fool (Turtleback

Author: Jane Yolen, Robert Harris

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Description:

"Where history ends, storytelling begins," writes Jane Yolen in her author's note to this exciting novel based on the life of Mary, Queen of Scots. Only a few facts are known about Mary's young female jester, le Jardiniere, but Yolen and her collaborator, Scottish writer Robert Harris, have created a fascinating girl narrator based on this historical oddity. Le Jardiniere relates the true and tragic tale of the ill-fated 16th-century queen of Scotland.

In 1559, when a ragtag troupe of traveling entertainers is snatched from the sodden streets of Rheims to amuse the bored visiting French court, 13-year-old Nicola Ambruzzi impresses the queen with her wit and honesty. The beautiful young Mary takes the girl under her protection as "the

queen's own fool," commissioned to speak the truth boldly amid the fawning lies and schemes of the courtiers. Around them swarm secret plots, duplicity, and betrayal; death is a constant threat.

After her weak boy-husband King Francis dies, the kindhearted Mary is unwilling to hear Nicola speak the truth about her suitors. She experiences two disastrous marriages, first with the handsome wastrel Darnley and then--for political expediency--with his murderer, the treacherous Bothwell. When he plots against her, she must flee back to Scotland to try to resume her throne in the midst of swirling conflict between the Protestant lords and their Catholic rulers. Nicola's wit and daring get them through some dangerous situations, but Mary is eventually imprisoned in the stark castle of Lochleven, where their hairsbreadth attempts at escape wind up a story from history as exciting and deeply affecting as any of Yolen's fantasy novels. (Ages 12 and older) --*Patty Campbell* -- This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly "La Jardiniere," one of the court jesters to Mary Queen of Scots, is the subject of this collaborative offering from veteran Yolen (*Off We Go!* and *How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight?*, reviewed above) and Scottish debut author Harris. The resulting lengthy first-person novel will appeal to fans of historical sagas, but it lacks the emotional punch that would seem to accompany its interesting subject. A member of a slovenly traveling troupe, young Nicola performs for Queen Mary, wife of the newly crowned King Francis, in Rheims while the royal family mourns the death of Francis's father. Nicola's clever and fearless observations soon win the queen's favor as well as a place at her side: "I am sure it befits a nobleman of France to be to be grand in every sense," she quips, punning on their girth. Nicola remains loyal to the royal through the latter's two subsequent husbands (both nefarious), persecution for her Catholicism in a Protestant Scotland and the queen's being falsely accused of murder. While Nicola's wit sparkles, Mary remains an elusive character. At times the authors seem confined by the facts: several prolonged illness and escape sequences have very little effect on the story's outcome, and the numerous members of court may well blur together for readers. Unfortunately, the curious position of court jesters--intimates with royalty, yet never equals--is only hinted at and never fully explored. Ages 10-14. (May) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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