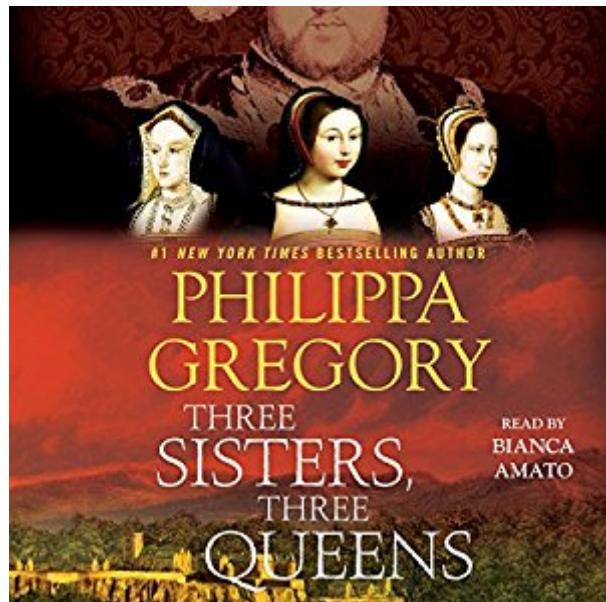


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Three Sisters, Three Queens



Synopsis

From the number-one New York Times best-selling author behind the upcoming Starz original series *The White Princess*, a gripping new Tudor story featuring King Henry VIII's sisters Mary and Margaret, along with Katherine of Aragon, vividly revealing the pivotal roles the three queens played in Henry VIII's kingdom. As sisters they share an everlasting bond; As queens they can break each other's hearts. When Katherine of Aragon is brought to the Tudor court as a young bride, the oldest princess, Margaret, takes her measure. With one look, each knows the other for a rival, an ally, a pawn, destined - with Margaret's younger sister Mary - to a sisterhood unique in all the world. The three sisters will become the queens of England, Scotland, and France.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 21 hours and 9 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Audio

Audible.com Release Date: August 9, 2016

Language: English

ASIN: B01CUN6KU8

Best Sellers Rank: #11 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Romance > Historical #19 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Historical Fiction #46 in Books > Romance > Historical

Customer Reviews

When it comes to historical fiction, I have full faith in the creativity, imagination and research of #1 New York Times bestselling author Philippa Gregory. A gifted writer and an exceptional storyteller, I have revisited the past so often through her writings. The Tudor kings and queens of the past have so often come alive through the pages of her books, sometimes one tends wonder where is fiction and what is history. I'm inclined to believe that reading Philippa Gregory is a lesson in history which the classrooms and lecture halls of the finest universities cannot provide. *Three Sisters, Three Queens* by Philippa Gregory is the latest in her long list of historical portrayals in which she has almost outdone herself by giving an account of the women of the Plantagenet and Tudor dynasties, notably Margaret Tudor, older sister of Henry VIII and queen to James IV of Scotland. It is an interesting character study as Margaret was portrayed as unstable and unreliable. As the author

beautifully blends fact with fiction, it is not easy to separate what was true and what was not. The book is also about Katherine of Aragon and the Dowager French Queen, Mary, though to a much lesser degree. In *Three Sisters, Three Queens* by Philippa Gregory, the author does a superlative job in piecing together every bit of history and created an image of the sisters, especially Margaret, hitherto unknown to many. By detailing her traits and characteristics, the author managed to create a life-like image of Margaret which makes the reading all the more interesting. With Philippa Gregory trademark suspense and intrigue intact, and the usual fine writing, the book makes for an absorbing read.

As an avid Philippa Gregory reader, I have read everything she has published. I love the *Wideacre* trilogy and even find delight in the outlier novels such as "The Wise Woman" and "Fallen Skies". This current novel, however, has none of the magic of "Taming of the Queen" or the "White Queen" series. Instead of creating a vivid Scottish world, Gregory has given us a fairly two dimensional heroine who's obsessive desire to best her sisters drives every decision. Margaret Tudor spends most of the novel reciting epic battles and whining. We are not given any of the rich detail of Gregory's previous novels nor do we feel very strongly for Margaret. There is little story telling and lots of listing of events. Margaret's world just happens around her and we as the reader are not part of it. She is a petulant woman child and her story is incredibly reminiscent of her granddaughter's life. I found myself waiting for the book to be over. Gregory had the chance to recreate the magic she had done with Katherine Parr but fell incredibly flat. I still love Gregory but will not be rereading "Three Sisters" anytime soon.

This was truly one of those books that you hated to have end; I thank NetGalley for the ARC which I was delighted to get. Philippa Gregory did a masterful job giving what seems to be accurate motives for many of the events in Margaret's life. Was she haunted by her envy of her sister Mary and her sister in law Katherine? Perhaps but it is a novelist's prerogative to tell a plausible tale when the facts are missing. Surely, Margaret's life was juxtaposed against her sister and sister in law's, all of them suffering hardships in a world where women had little say at all. Margaret did have her on-again, off-again regency for her son James the young king of Scotland to enable her to be more in control of her destiny than either her sister or Katherine of Aragon. I am not sure that Margaret and her "sisters" were rivals, they were just mutual victims of some of the madness of Henry VIII's reign. Did they have to collude against him at times or support him against each other? Surely. She was a strong woman and rose above many hardships, the biggest one was the warring and

polarizing of her Scottish subjects. It is amazing to me that Scotland has not declared their independence long before this time, the majority of Ireland has done so. The things that were done to the Scots people just during Margaret Tudor's lifetime are incredible. Having read other books about the "Debatable Lands" in between the two kingdoms, I found this story very informative as to how and why people behaved as they did. You can actually also juxtapose this era and the British-Irish and British-Scots assaults against the others; they are essentially the same at this time, the British "Pale" and the "Debatable Lands". Today is release day- get your copy right now!

Philippa Gregory puts the reader right in the middle of the lives of the rich and famous, even when it's over five hundred years ago. She makes historical figures come alive, giving them believable personalities, putting words in their mouths. We can watch a movie about historical figures accepting an actors interpretation without comment, yet when it is put in writing we somehow expect the author to know exactly what they were thinking. Gregory has created viable personalities for the famous women dotting the English monarchy and aristocracy. She does it with insight, making them feel like flesh and blood, rather than flat, boring characters. Margaret Tudor is no exception. She is haughty, conceited, jealous and quite full of herself. She was entitled, indulged, and spoiled. Not surprising when you read about her brother's personality in all the history books. I enjoyed this book. Gregory breaths life into the Tudor court, giving believable personalities to the players. Margaret Tudor was sent into Scotland as a child. She ended up being the ancestor of the current ruling dynasty, and it seems that most of the attention landed upon her grandson James Stewart, nieces, brother, and even her sister eclipsing both Margaret and her husband. Little Jane Grey, the nine day queen even gets more press. There is not much known about Margaret and the spotlight shining on the Tudor court seemed rarely to catch her. I think Gregory brings her into the warmth of that spotlight with an understanding of what a teenager might be feeling when left out in the cold.

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