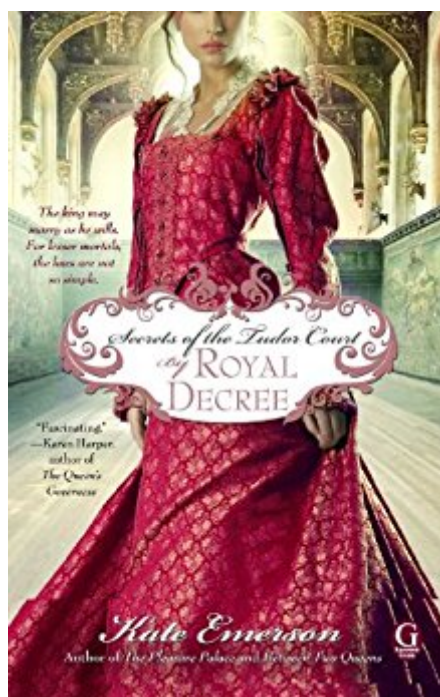


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Secrets Of The Tudor Court: By Royal Decree



Synopsis

AS TEMPESTUOUS AS THE TUDOR MONARCHS THEMSELVES, THE SECRETS OF THE TUDOR COURT SERIES HAS BEEN CALLED "RIVETING" (BOOKLIST) AND "WELL DRAWN" (PUBLISHERS WEEKLY). Charming. Desirable. Forbidden. Brought to court with other eligible young noblewomen by the decree of King Henry VIII, lovely Elizabeth "Bess" Brooke realizes for the first time that beauty can be hazardous. Although Bess has no desire to wed the aging king, she and her family would have little choice if Henry's eye were to fall on her. And other dangers exist as well, for Bess has caught the interest of dashing courtier Will Parr. Bess finds Will's kisses as sweet as honey, but marriage between them may be impossible. Will is a divorced man, and remarriage is still prohibited. Bess and Will must hope that the king can be persuaded to issue a royal decree allowing Will to marry again . . . but to achieve their goal, the lovers will need royal favor. Amid the swirling alliances of royalty and nobles, Bess and Will perform a dangerous dance of palace intrigue and pulse-pounding passions. Brought to glowing life by the talented Kate Emerson, and seen through the eyes of a beautiful young noblewoman, By Royal Decree illuminates the lives of beautiful young courtiers in and out of the rich and compelling drama of the Tudor court.

Book Information

File Size: 1393 KB

Print Length: 387 pages

Publisher: Gallery Books (December 14, 2010)

Publication Date: December 14, 2010

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B003UYUP7G

Text-to-Speech: Not enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #392,004 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #150

in Books > Romance > Historical > Tudor #2607 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States #13525 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Romance >

Customer Reviews

The further I get into this series, the more I enjoy it! I wasn't all that in love with the first book, 'Pleasure Palace', but I really enjoyed the second, 'Between Two Queens'. This book I enjoyed even more! I flew through it in just a couple days and hated having to put it down. There are SO many books out about the Tudor Court and the influential people that populated it, and some of them are great, while many are just historical gossip mags dressed up as Historical Fiction. Ms. Emerson does a great job though of bringing her characters (who were very real people) back to life and making you feel for them. I've come across Elizabeth Brook's name before, but just as a quick mention. She's certainly not anyone who stands out from the Tudor period, and most authors just pass right over her, if she's even mentioned at all. Ms. Emerson though shows us what an interesting life Bess Brook lead, and that it was possible for true love to overcome in Tudor England...a place where gentle-born women must marry the men their fathers choose for them. Bess refused to do that and her and William Parr overcame so many obstacles to be together. Even when Queen Mary Tudor pulled them apart, they managed to make it through her reign to the ascension of Elizabeth I, who allowed them to be together as they should. I was so disappointed when this book ended. I was hoping for it to just keep going. I wanted to read about Will and Bess during Elizabeth's reign, but I guess once she took the throne they lived a pretty nondescript life at court. Bess only lived another 7 years after the end of the book, succumbing to breast cancer, but I would have loved to read about her final years with Will.

***Those not familiar with Tudor history might consider this review a bit spoilerish. Consider yourself warned**The story begins as Elizabeth (Bess) Brooke is one of a large party of eligible noblewomen invited to dine with Henry VIII so he can peruse them and pick his next bride. Luckily for Bess she's passed over for Kathryn Parr, who ends up as wife #6. Bess comes to court and ultimately meets and falls in love with Queen Kathryn's brother William Parr, but there's a hitch. William was given a divorce from his first wife for being unfaithful, but he's not allowed to remarry until she kicks the bucket and their only hope is a "Royal Decree" from the King. When Henry dies, his son Edward is crowned king and William curries favor with Edward and his guardians (first Edward Seymour, then John Dudley), always hoping to gain that "Royal Decree" allowing him to marry Bess. The Princess Elizabeth is given into Kathryn's care and Bess also joins her household in the country. Edward, never the healthy one, dies and with no male heir to follow him England is divided over the choices

left - should they support Mary and face a return to Catholicism, or the Lady Jane Grey? And if William supports the wrong party, their hopes for a "Royal Decree" allowing them to wed might be dashed forever...Sounds like all the material one needs for a fat juicy novel no? Unfortunately, Emerson is not quite up to giving Bess and William the treatment their story really deserves. Too much time is spent with Bess and William mooning over each other as Henry's court flits from one palace to the next, and not enough on the latter part of their lives as they live in terror of losing one's head during Mary's reign.

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