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Assassin (The Grace Mysteries)



Synopsis

WHEN MARGARET CAVENDISH, one of Elizabeth I's Gentlewomen of the Bedchamber, lost her life in a bungled attempt to kill the Queen, her daughter, Lady Grace, became a protégée to the monarch, who takes Grace under her wing. Now Grace, a spunky girl who romps through the gardens with the laundry maids and court tumblers and rolls her eyes at her fellow ladies, chronicles the court intrigues that swirl around her. . . . It's the spring of 1569 and 13-year-old Lady Grace, the youngest lady-in-waiting to the Queen, finds herself at a glittering ball choosing amongst three suitors. But the Queen's generosity turns deadly as threats, dark secrets, and even murder descend on the Tudor court. And it is up to Grace to use her intelligence, stealth, and curious nature to solve the mystery that threatens the very lifeblood of England.

Book Information

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Series: The Grace Mysteries (Book 1)

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Shipping Weight: 1.6 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 27 customer reviews

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Reviewed with Grace Cavendish's Betrayal.Gr. 4-7. This new series, ostensibly the diaries (or daybooks) of Lady Grace Cavendish (the real author is British writer Patricia Finney), takes place in the court of Queen Elizabeth I, where Grace serves as a lady-in-waiting. With plenty of

twenty-first-century spunk, she solves mysteries that are turning the court upside down. In *Assassin*, one of Grace's suitors is murdered, and the 13-year-old's cool-headed calculations prove that the lord to whom she has given her hand is not the killer as everyone supposes. He is also not the man Grace believes him to be, so she gives him the boot. In *betrayal*, another young lady-in-waiting seems to have eloped with Sir Francis Drake, but Grace uses her prognosticating skill and masquerades as a boy to prove otherwise. The books, which occasionally use Old English words (there's a glossary) and handwritten notes, are filled with details of Elizabethan life. An author's note distinguishes fact from fiction. The stories move swiftly, and the mix of history and mystery will keep kids interested. Ilene Cooper

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WHEN MARGARET CAVENDISH, one of Elizabeth I's Gentlewomen of the Bedchamber, lost her life in a bungled attempt to kill the Queen, her daughter, Lady Grace, became a protégée to the monarch, who takes Grace under her wing. Now Grace, a spunky girl who romps through the gardens with the laundry maids and court tumblers and rolls her eyes at her fellow ladies, chronicles the court intrigues that swirl around her. . . . It's the spring of 1569 and 13-year-old Lady Grace, the youngest lady-in-waiting to the Queen, finds herself at a glittering ball choosing amongst three suitors. But the Queen's generosity turns deadly as threats, dark secrets, and even murder descend on the Tudor court. And it is up to Grace to use her intelligence, stealth, and curious nature to solve the mystery that threatens the very lifeblood of England.

This well written and fun book is definitely geared for tween and young teen girls. I am definitely not a tween, much, much older, but like reading YA fiction ever since Harry Potter showed us that this could be done in a way it could entertain adults. So, to reiterate, this book is not like that, it is targeted toward a younger reader, in the way the characters think, speak and act, as well as the basic plot. I think I would have enjoyed it very much when I was 10 or so. But here is why I recommend it (and why I read it in the first place). The author is an incredibly accomplished writer of historical fiction. She easily transports you completely to a different time and place, and whether or not she is truly accurate, she writes so convincingly you believe the details of life she inserts so effortlessly are real and that is how it must have been. She also writes with humor and a good sense of pacing, so you are kept entertained on every page. So if you want to spend a few hours in Elizabethan England, learn what it was like to be a handmaiden in the Queen's court and be entertained by a fun and twisty mystery, read this book. If you want slightly more adult fare, read this

author's other series, all extremely good, well written and with the same fabulous historical immersion.

This YA by Patricia Finney is actually pretty good. It kept my attention throughout. I think it sells the YA audience short, as it felt unsophisticated, or some adjective I'm having a hard time coming up with. So don't look for the quality you'll find in Patricia Finney's other books. That said, suspend a bit of your own sophistication, and enjoy a light reads journey into the court of Elizabeth I.

Lady Grace is a bright, spunky Maid of Honor to Queen Elizabeth who has the nerve to think for herself. When one of her suitors is murdered and another accused, she takes it on herself to solve the crime. Lady Grace is a charming new detective, and I hope to see much more of her.

Patricia Finney is a favorite author of mine and she did a fine job on this story which is for younger readers than me of course. Period details are always correct and Lady Grace gave everyone a fine romp.

I like the spunky heroine but she sure does talk a lot. Lots of action and good story line.

Reason for Reading: This is another book from the Random Bookshelf that I am reading from this year. This book interested me because of its similarity to the Dear Canada/Royal Diaries books with the added bonus of being a mystery. Lady Grace Cavendish is 13 years old and one of Queen Elizabeth I's Maids of Honour (a step below a Lady-in-Waiting). She writes in her daybooke as if it were a diary about her day to day adventures which become quite exciting. Since the Queen is her godmother and promised her dead mother that she would acquire a suitable husband for Grace a party is to be celebrated this Valentine's. Here Grace will pick one of her three suitors to be handfasted to until she is sixteen and ready for betrothal. By the end of that night Grace has picked her future husband, a murder has been committed and her betrothed is locked up as the killer with evidence plainly in sight against him. Grace, with the Queen's approval, sets out to prove his innocence along with the help of her friends, a laundry girl, and a boy from the acrobatic troupe. The mystery is fun, Grace is spunky, and the historical setting is quite realistic. All the characters, except Grace, behave and speak according to the period. Grace herself is a fictional character, but real life historical figures do take a part in the story. The atmosphere is very anti-Catholic, with quite a lot of rude prejudiced statements uttered but this is true to history as the time period *was* entirely

anti-Catholic to the point of death and religious wars. The author's historical note does nothing to explain this bias, though, which is unfortunate. I didn't take to Grace herself as she acted and spoke as a modern girl would. She barely even cared that she was breaking very strict rules by cavorting around at nighttime on her own, and alas, her punishments were nothing as would have befallen a real girl of the 1500s. Grace's way of speaking is very modern, and the things she wrote in her daybooke would have been blasphemous at the time period, even for the new Church of England faith. As to the mystery, unfortunately, I had it solved before it even occurred! But of course, this is coming from my adult eyes and I do think because the historical setting, with the exception of Grace, is quite accurate that the series could be of some historical benefit and girls will probably enjoy spunky Grace's escapades around court, in hidden corners with the staff and nighttime derring-do.

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