



Royal Inheritance

Kate Emerson

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This new novel in the “wonderfully absorbing” (Library Journal) Secrets of the Tudor Court series, features a tailor’s daughter who suspects she is an illegitimate offspring of King Henry VIII.

Audrey Malte, born about 1528 and raised at court by the king’s tailor, John Malte, was led to believe she is Malte’s illegitimate daughter when, in fact, her father is King Henry VIII. When she reaches marriageable age, she begins to realize, from the way certain people behave toward her, that Malte is keeping secrets from her, and she sets out to discover the truth. Her quest involves the best and the worst of the courtiers, among them a man with whom she falls in love.

Unfortunately, Malte has already entered into negotiations for her betrothal to someone else, and Audrey guesses the truth about her legacy when the king settles property on her, jointly with Malte. Marriage is definitely in Audrey’s future, but will it be to the man she wants to wed?

Royal Inheritance Details

Date : Published September 24th 2013 by Gallery Books

ISBN : 9781451661514

Author : Kate Emerson

Format : Paperback 368 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, English History, Tudor Period, Fiction, Romance

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From Reader Review Royal Inheritance for online ebook

Patty says

I do love the Tudors and it's interesting to come across a book that takes them on in a new and different way. When someone reads as much as I do there can most certainly be Tudor Fatigue. While Royal Inheritance doesn't present anything new historically it does present the possibility of Henry VIII fathering yet another bastard. What? Henry VIII?! He would never!

Uh-huh.

The conceit in the novel is what bothers me; a mother telling her history to her 8 year old daughter. A very precocious daughter at that. It's a dangerous history. A history that must stay hidden and could prove deadly. And she shares it with a talkative 8 year old? Could she not have written her a letter instead? It didn't ring true. While I was reading the parts where I was immersed in Audrey's story I was thoroughly entertained and engrossed, then the book would return to its present where Audrey was interacting with her daughter Hester and it all fell flat for me again.

The main characters were very well developed; Audrey, her father, Henry VIII, Audrey's husband, John Harington. The villains were a little less so - they were all bad, all the time. Especially Audrey's stepsister Bridget. There was nothing redeemable about her. The main plot was engrossing and as I mentioned above just enough of a different point of view to make this Tudor novel fun to read. The sub-plot about Hester annoyed me to no end. Overall it was a quick, easy read with an interesting look a possible new Tudor.

3.5

Maegan Mariee says

I can not express enough how happy I am to have finished this series. The last three were a big letdown for me, considering I found the first three to be quite interesting. The premise of this installment could have been a great read, but I don't think it was executed well enough. I didn't develop a connection with the characters, not even enough to hate the 'villians'. A quick read, but I skimmed over a few spots that I found to be unnecessary or boring.

Susan says

Her Royal Inheritance is the first book that I have read by Emerson, and it proved to be an amazing read. I have always enjoyed reading about Tudor England both fiction and nonfiction which is why this book appealed to me. Emerson delivers an intriguing tale full of drama, mystery, and a hint of romance. Audrey Malte grew up thinking that she was the daughter of King Henry VIII's tailor, but rumors start to make her think that she may actually be the daughter of the king. The search for the truth sends Audrey on a journey of growth as she goes from a small child to a young woman who wants to follow her heart instead of being a pawn for those who want her inheritance. The one thing that I really enjoyed about this book was how Emerson used the format of Audrey telling her story to her young daughter Hester so that Hester would

never have to go searching for the truth like Audrey had to. Audrey imparts the wisdom her own journey taught her so that her young daughter can use what she learned to avoid the mistakes of the past. The attention to detail in the book is well done showing how much research Emerson did to create this amazing story. Overall Her Royal Inheritance proved to be an amazing read that I would most definitely recommend to anyone who has enjoyed books by Philippa Gregory and Alison Weir.

Received Her Royal Inheritance through NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Crystal says

Have you ever started reading a book to quickly find out it wasn't going to be what you thought it was? That was the case with me for Royal Inheritance. It wasn't what I was expecting at all but it turned out to be an very enjoyable read. I find myself stepping out of my comfort zone on the occasion and I've really enjoyed reading a books that broaden my reading palate.

I truly enjoyed reading Audrey's story, she was a very smart girl, with the knowledge to know what she should keep to herself. I loved how she interacted with the various people from different societies of life. For being a merchant's daughter she really was brought up to be quite the lady. A little on the mischievous side at times but this girl really has my admiration.

I loved how she was doing her best to give her daughter all the details she needed to know so she didn't have to wonder later. I also appreciated the fact that she had to caution her daughter to guard the information she gave to her. I also found Audrey and Jack's interaction together to be quite entertaining and I often wondered what may happen next.

Kate Emerson has done a lovely job of combining fiction as well as giving us a nice education of English history around the time of King Henry the VIII. Ms. Emerson has created a story that I found to be very enjoyable and fascinating. I enjoyed her style of writing, she tells a very well written story that kept me interested from the beginning to the end. I would not hesitate to read more work written by MS. Emerson.

I have not had the pleasure of reading the other books in the Secrets of Tudor Court, I have a feeling they would be an interesting read as well. I didn't feel like I was missing anything to the story with not having read the previous five books.

If you enjoy historical fiction mixed in with some interesting historical facts I really do think you will enjoy this book.

I was given the opportunity to read Royal Inheritance in exchange for sharing my thoughts with you. As always it has been a pure pleasure for me to share my thoughts with you. If you should happen to have read or do read this book I would love to hear your thoughts. Please stop by my blog and let me know what you thought.

Faye says

Audrey Malte's father is tailor to King Henry VIII, when Audrey is invited to court rumors begin to fly

because of her red hair, but she finds true friendship in the eyes of a young man named Jack. As speculation grows that Audrey may be the king's daughter, Audrey struggles to hold close the ones dear to her.

Kate Emerson has woven a rich Tudor novel, that though part of a series stands well on it's own, in fact I didn't know it was a series until I finished it. The story was well written and swift moving, I don't know why but I always find myself drawn to the Tudors and tale set during this dangerous time of conspiracy and intrigue, and this book was just what I needed.

This book was filled with characters both real and fictional, with a good balance between fictitious and real. Audrey was a wonderful heroine, who was loyal to the ones she loved. I also liked the character of her father, because he truly loved her and had her best interests in mind.

Overall this was a riveting tale, that would be great for fans of Sandra Byrd's Tudor novels. I loved the first person storytelling and how it bounced from the "present" to the past as Audrey told her story to her decedents. An excellently entertaining novel!

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received one or more of the products or services mentioned above for free in the hope that I would mention it on my blog. Regardless, I only recommend products or services I use personally and believe will be good for my readers. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and testimonials in Advertising."

Marilyn Rondeau says

Audrey Malte was illegitimate, though her beloved father John Malte, tailor to King Henry VIII prefers to call her "merry-begot" (love this term). Growing up Audrey was often brought to the castle when John Malte, was summoned by the king. As she grew older, her distinctive red hair caused more than a few double takes and whispers, however much John Malte cautioned her to keep herself under wraps and not wander unprotected in the palace. As Audrey grew older she was granted more benefits from the king such as music lessons, dancing, etc. All things that would befit a lady born and not the merry-begot daughter of his tailor.

*** Reading like fiction, most all the characters are based on actual persons while the story itself was given a few literary licenses in the telling which could or could not have been the way things happened. In any event, reading ROYAL INHERITANCE was a total delight and the knowledge that these were for the most part real people, made it a wonderfully interesting and enjoyable read.

Written as the remembrances of a dying mother to her young daughter, it was quite emotional as Audrey, tried to give her daughter both insight and warnings of how the world around her operated, so that her daughter would be better prepared to negotiate life after she was gone. It was poignant in the telling and

pulled no punches in what life could and would be like for anyone trying to trade on relations and or political maneuverings which could get one killed especially on the whim of the royal crown.

Filled with all the actual political maneuverings, betrayals, beheadings, and treasonous backstories which existed during Henry VIII's reign Ms. Emerson kept me both entertained and interested in gleaning just a little bit more of the historical goings on during that period. ROYAL INHERITANCE was all I could have wished for with impeccable historical facts and research as well as a story that had infinite possibilities of exactly what this author envisioned.

Marilyn Rondeau, for www.ck2skwipsandkritiques.com

Valencia says

Very interesting! I really liked it! King Henry strikes again!

Colleen Turner says

I reviewed this book for www.luxuryreading.com.

Royal Inheritance presents a unique viewpoint of the ever shifting Tudor world as well as the politics and schemes that swirl around those with the potential to have even a drop of royal blood. Using the real life circumstances of a laundress's daughter rumored to have potentially been the bastard offspring of Henry VIII, Kate Emerson spins a remarkable tale of a young woman kept guessing as to her true identity and her dangerous fight to not only find the truth but to determine her own future in a world where women have little say in the course of their lives.

Weakened by a fever she contracted in the summer of 1556, Audrey Harington sets out to tell her young daughter, Hester, the truth about Audrey's parentage, upbringing and marriage to her husband, Jack. Not knowing how much longer she might have, Audrey is determined to make sure her own daughter doesn't remain ignorant to the facts of her heritage as she herself spent much of her life being.

Born the daughter of a poor laundress working in Windsor Castle, Audrey is removed from her abusive home at the age of four and placed in the home of John Malte, Henry VIII's tailor, who claims to be her father. However, after accompanying her father to court and coming face to face with the King, his attentions seem odd to young Audrey. She is further confused when he demands she continue to accompany her father to court, presents her with various gifts and orders she receive lessons not extended to her other sisters, all very unusual for a simple merchant's daughter. Furthermore, her father is given gifts beyond his station, land and properties given jointly to John Malte and Audrey. After meeting the King's youngest daughter, the Princess Elizabeth, and noting the remarkable likeness to herself, Audrey begins to suspect that John Malte might not be her biological father after all.

I admittedly cannot get enough of reading about the Tudors from various vantage points. While the greater goings on of Henry VIII, his wives and his children do play a part in Royal Inheritance, Audrey's attempts to

navigate through life and find her true place in the world takes center stage. I found this particularly interesting as novels dealing with the Tudors tend to focus on the glitz and glamour of the court and not the day to day goings on of those outside the realm of the nobility. I enjoyed seeing London from the viewpoint of someone raised in the bustle of normal life there.

What I enjoyed most, however, would be the fact that most of the people and events seemed to be true to history. The back of Royal Inheritance includes a “Who Was Who at the English Court: 1532 – 56” and this helped flesh out the facts from the fiction used to advance the story. Even my least favorite part of Royal Inheritance, the somewhat unrequited love between Audrey and Jack, appears to be supported by known facts. While this relationship made for a rather bitter sweet tone to the end of Audrey’s story, I appreciate the fact that Kate Emerson stayed as true to history as she could.

Anyone interested in viewing the Tudors from a slight distance and learning more about those on the fringes of the court will really enjoy Royal Inheritance. I plan on looking further into these real life characters to see what else I can learn.

Page (One Book At A Time) says

I found this book to be a little different than the previous books in the series. I still enjoyed it, but the events seemed a lot tamer than they had in previous books.

I really liked Audrey. I was a little surprised that she didn't question her own heritage sooner. If it were me, I would wonder why a chance meeting with the king would lead to being removed from my abusive home and being placed with a rich merchant. If that wasn't enough to question, then the king orders Audrey be brought to court, given all sorts of lessons above her adoptive sisters. It's no wonder they become jealous of Audrey.

As Audrey becomes of marriageable age, a very undesirable match comes forward. Audrey has no desire to become the daughter-in-law of a man accused of murder, especially when she learns who this man thinks her father really is. She hopes that if she delays long enough, that she will be able to marry the man she truly loves. But, what happens when the king gets involved? Will she be able to defy her king as well?

I enjoyed how this story is told in flashbacks in the way of Audrey telling her background to her 8 year old daughter Hester. She feels she does not have luxury of time to tell this story when her daughter is older. I'm not sure why she felt her daughter needed this information in the first place, but so be it.

I'm hoping this series exhausted yet. I've really enjoyed Kate Emerson's ability to take little known people in history and give them their own story!

Anastacia says

I was first introduced to Emerson by reading the first book in her series, the Pleasure Palace, but haven't read the rest of the books in the series. It does very well as a stand-alone book (coming from me, that's high praise).

The story is told in two parts, the past and the present - the premise is Audrey, who is sick, is telling her 8 year old daughter, Hester, her life story - a dangerous life story which could get them all killed. There's some holes left open in the plot (perhaps on purpose as this is a series), but basically you are led to believe that Audrey is the king's daughter because he pays a lot of attention to her, attention not given the rest of her family.

I don't particularly like books or shows where you bounce back and forth from past to present, but I didn't mind it in this book - Emerson does this very well. I did have a problem with Audrey telling her daughter all this stuff at such a young age. I understand it would have been too difficult to write her daughter a letter that someone else might discover, but honestly, why would her daughter even need to know that she might be related to the king? No one was acknowledging them, so what did it matter?

I also found it really sad that Audrey obsessed most of her early adult years over a man who really didn't love her, and then she ended up marrying him and wondered why her life didn't turn out better than it did.

Erin says

Find this and other reviews at: <http://flashlightcommentary.blogspot...>

Book six of Kate Emerson's Secrets of the Tudor Court series, Royal Inheritance, boasts an interesting premise in that it fictionalizes the life of Audrey (Ethelreda) Malte, but unfortunately, I can't say I found it a particularly interesting read.

When push comes to shove I don't think there was enough meat on the bone to make this story work, at least not as it is currently marketed. Had the publisher pushed this as the tale of a tailor's daughter who is suddenly swept into the high stake games of the royal court or the death bed confessions of a woman determined to pass on the secrets of her past, I would have been happy, but I very strongly feel that someone somewhere along the line committed a grave injustice by deciding to give a nearly complete play by play of the entire plot in the jacket description.

Audrey Malte, born about 1528 and raised at court by the king's tailor, John Malte, was led to believe she is Malte's illegitimate daughter when, in fact, her father is King Henry VIII. When she reaches marriageable age, she begins to realize, from the way certain people behave toward her, that Malte is keeping secrets from her, and she sets out to discover the truth. Her quest involves the best and the worst of the courtiers, among them a man with whom she falls in love. Unfortunately, Malte has already entered into negotiations for her betrothal to someone else, and Audrey guesses the truth about her legacy when the king settles property on her, jointly with Malte. Marriage is definitely in Audrey's future, but will it be to the man she wants to wed?

Let's ignore that the blurb actually states "her father is King Henry VIII" and think about the rest of that paragraph. It was impossible to definitively prove paternity in the Tudor era so in essence Audrey's "quest" lacks a tangible goal and when one considers the king gifted her property, the question itself becomes irrelevant as he obviously felt some sort of responsibility towards her, and really, who wants to argue with Henry VIII? Anyone? Anyone at all?

Pardon me for asking, but where is the hook here? Where is the surprise, the unexpected plot twist or complex intrigue? And before anyone tries to argue the question of who Audrey will wed, I'd like to point out that particular mystery is revealed towards the top of page three of this three hundred and seventy page

volume.

Now to be fair there is a second description for this title, but still, I feel the jacket only served to shoot Emerson in the foot.

Audrey Malte is illegitimate, though her beloved father—tailor to King Henry VIII—prefers to call her “merry-begot,” saying there was much joy in her making. Then Audrey visits the royal court with her father, and the whispers start about Audrey’s distinctive Tudor-red hair and the kindness that the king shows her. Did dashing Henry perhaps ask Malte to raise a royal love child? The king’s favor, however, brings Audrey constraint as well as opportunity. Though she holds tender feelings for her handsome music tutor, John Harington, the king is pressuring her to marry into the family of treacherous, land-hungry Sir Richard Southwell. Audrey determines to learn the truth about her birth at last. The answer may give her the freedom to give her heart as she chooses . . . or it could ensnare her deeper in an enemy’s ruthless scheme.

Again, rumors of her being Henry VIII's child, mention of a quest to discover that which cannot be proven and confirmation of the king's favor which again, makes the question of her paternity a moot point. This one however offers up the names of Audrey's prospects while simultaneously pigeonholing one as her beloved and the other as a sixteenth century gold-digger. Not bad, but it falls apart when Audrey is referred to as Mistress _____ in the first paragraph of the first page of the very first chapter.

Needless to say, I was frustrated and bored reading this piece. I couldn't get into it because there just wasn't anything left for me to get into. I'm keeping my fingers crossed for the rest of the series, but when all is said and done, my experience with Royal Inheritance, through no fault of the author, left much to be desired.

Jo Barton says

Audrey Malte , although illegitimate is brought up on the periphery of the Tudor court. Her alleged father is a tailor to King Henry VIII, and in the course of his work, he takes Audrey to court with him, where she comes into contact with the King. The king appears to be quite taken with Audrey, and ensures that she has rather more privileges than the rest of her family, which leads people to assume that Audrey is in fact the king's illegitimate daughter.

Based on a real historical figure, the story is told by Audrey, now married and a mother. She is relaying the story of her life to her rather precocious 8 year old daughter, Hester, who appears to have a grasp of adult relationships far beyond her tender years. The story flits backwards and forwards in time quite well, and describes a believable set of circumstances which the author has blended into a interesting and different look at Tudor England.

For those familiar with Kate Emerson's writing, this book is a continuation of the Secrets of the Tudor Court series, and as such sits comfortably within its genre.

IslandRiverScribe says

When I accepted an ARC for this book, I felt, based on the promotional blurb, that I would be reviewing a historical romance. Oh, was I wrong!

This is not the typical scenario in which the hero and heroine are forced into an arranged marriage but wind up madly in love with each other anyway – far from it. This is an embellished biography of Audrey Malte, one of King Henry VIII's illegitimate children. The characters in this novel are not fictional nor are the main events of the story. After considerable and detailed research, the author has filled in the blanks around the known and published facts of this time period and has created a readable drama that begins with Audrey's first known memories and ends just prior to her death.

The author has crafted a story told primarily in Audrey's first person POV. This story moved with a pace, placement and consistency of descriptions and dialog that emulated what I would suspect was the speech pattern of the English in the early 1500's. As I read, it felt as if I were an intimate and present observer – the proverbial fly on the wall. It also felt like I was back in a History or English Lit classroom with that instructor who could absolutely breathe life into those old, dull events of the past. The writing was smooth and the scenes and chapters flowed naturally from one to the next.

But, for me, it was far from an entertaining read. From the very first chapter we learn that the heroine is dying and this casts a pall and a depression over the entire story. And if the reader remembers anything about the reign of Henry VIII – the political and religious persecutions, the Tower of London, the executions by beheading with drawing and quartering – he or she will know nothing good is going to come out of a story that centers on a personage so closely related to the king himself.

So, if you read for escapism, you might want to think a bit before embarking on this book or the series from which it stems. Because what you're not going to escape from are 332 pages of fear, persecution, death and unrequited love. What you are not going to escape from is page after page of waiting for the proverbial other shoe to drop and it drops a lot.

What you're not going to escape from is the misogynistic and chauvinistic actions of men toward women in those times. And what you're not going to escape from are the scenes that depict women and children as commodities – expendable commodities.

But what you are definitely not going to escape from is the fact that the only happy ending is still being alive at the end of a day.

This book starts with terror and ends with heartbreak. It may be the story of a child of the king and a court laundress, complete with wicked stepsister, but this is not the fairy tale of Cinderella. Prince Charming is a cad and the glass slipper never does fit right.

I received this ARC through the Goodreads First Reads program. This fact did not, in any way, influence my opinion of the book.

Leslie says

One of the things I love reading historical fiction, especially when it involves Henry VIII and his exploits, is reading a book with a plotline involving another unknown aspect of that time period. Upon starting Royal

Inheritance, I wasn't aware of Audrey Malte and the speculation that she is another one of Henry VIII children. I actually believed her character and situation was a fictional plot point the author, Kate Emerson, created for the book. Color me surprise, upon reading the book's notes, that all characters in the book, save for 2 or 3, were all real including Audrey. I enjoyed the book on its own, but when I found out this tidbit, it just added a little more mystique to the story.

I found the writing to be very easy to follow with a certain lyrical storyteller finish to it. There have been books taking place during this era whose narration tend to be on the more difficult end of the spectrum, trying to give the feel of the times. Here, it manages to do so, but without being weighed down by dramatic narration. This narrative and writing style added to the storytelling tone to the book, especially when it turned to Audrey's POV.

That's another aspect of the book I enjoyed. I thought it was a great idea to have Audrey tell her story to her daughter Hester, therefore the switching between Audrey's POV and third person narrative. I felt it added a more personal touch when the story is told by Audrey.

I was expecting to have the book focus more time towards the issue of Audrey's paternity. It wasn't until a little over halfway through the book where Audrey really questions who her father is and sets out to find the truth. But I suppose considering the story is about Audrey's life, as a child and young girl she wouldn't have the need to question who her father was. I just thought a great deal of the drama involved in the book would stem from the Audrey's search for the truth. However, there is still drama aplenty occurring. This is King Henry VIII and his court we are talking about and drama and intrigue is something that will not be lacking.

Like every other books on Henry VIII and the Tudor Court, Royal Inheritance had its own charm that made it very enjoyable for me. Many of the characters and situations are familiar to me considering how many books dealing with this era I have read. It was interesting to read them from a different perspective. I enjoyed reading this aspect of Henry VIII's legacy that I haven't heard of before. It's presented in a package of great writing and well researched details. If you are a fan of reading about King Henry VIII and the Tudors, then this book will be an enjoyable read for you.

*Received the ARC copy from Goodreads First Reads giveaway

Melinda says

I was so excited to pick this up since I rather enjoyed Kate Emerson's historical fictions. However, I was quite let down with this novel.

The blurb on the back was intriguing enough. Like who will Audrey marry? Her love or someone she despises? And then in the first chapter we already know! Like there goes that suspense.

I did not like Audrey and how the story was told at all. We keep going between the present (where Audrey is telling her story to her daughter Hester) and the past (when Audrey was a child and later as a young woman). Audrey just isn't that interesting, she is very naive, selfish and somewhat simple minded (totally dull). She doesn't pursue the rumor as to who her "father" is until someone brings it up, even then she is so willing to cling to the one "truth" that she blindly turns away from everything else.

We see snippets of history in the making that is intertwined with Audrey's story, but it's always so vague and seemed quite forced. Like historical events were superimposed onto Audrey's story to make it fit (triangle into a circle shape basically). Nothing flowed smoothly and was quite jumbled.

All Audrey cared about was her music, Jack and her family, nothing else. Very much single minded and doesn't seem to have much growth or development throughout the years, especially during some very dangerous times.

The ending was too open ended and didn't leave a good enough closure for me to be satisfied. Like what is Hester going to do with this information? Who was this other red headed man that Joanna may have been with, who may also be Audrey's father? Didn't more people question Audrey's parentage giving the similarities between her and Elizabeth?
