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Deception (The Grace Mysteries)



Synopsis

Queen Elizabeth is furious at the production delays of her new coin. To escape her bad temper, Lady Grace and her fellow Maids of Honour skate down the frozen River Thames to the eagerly anticipated Frost Fair. But a gruesome discovery on the ice— a dead man with coins covering his eyes—interrupts the winter revelry. As the Queen's Lady Pursuivant, Grace must unravel the mystery. Uncover a dangerous world of counterfeiting and corruption inside the private daybooke of Lady Grace, the queen's favorite Maid of Honour. All miscreants and ill-thinkers, keep out! The Lady Grace Mysteries come to us from the most privy and secret daybooke of Lady Grace Cavendish, Maid of Honour to her Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth I of that name.

Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

The Twenty-third Day of November, in the Year of Our Lord 1569
The Queen's Presence Chamber--after breakfast I have a new daybooke and I cannot wait to begin writing in it! I am determined to keep this book neat and tidy with my best lettering throughout--and not make it look as if a drunken spider has crawled over it. I am seated on a cushion with the other Maids of Honour

in the Queen's Presence Chamber awaiting Her Majesty's arrival. She is busy with matters of state. We have a huge fire, for it has been mightily cold this last week. Indeed, the river Thames itself has frozen! The ice is thick enough to walk on and everyone is talking about the Frost Fair that has been set up on the frozen water near the landing steps to the Inns of Court. It is so exciting! We hope to visit today, when Her Majesty has finally finished with boring state business. Outside, the ice and frost look very inviting, but inside it is gloomy and we have much need of candles. The other Maids are working at their embroidery and Mrs. Champernowne, Mistress of the Maids, is scowling at me for not doing the same. She looks ready to pounce the instant I make the tiniest ink blot upon my kirtle. But she dare not chide me too much, as Her Majesty herself gave me this daybooke and my fine quills and ink bottle. Ha, ha, Mrs. Champernowne! The Queen is my favourite person in the whole world. She has taken me under her wing and often shows me great kindness, because--* *

*Hell's teeth! I have nearly spoiled my book already. I had to duck from a flying cushion. It would seem that the matters of state did not go well, for the Queen has just burst in and is now roaring round the chamber like a baited bear. I'm not sure I should compare Her Majesty to a bear--baited or otherwise. However, this daybooke is for my eyes alone, so I don't think I shall have my head cut off! Besides, as I was about to write before the cushion interrupted me, I am a favourite with Her Majesty the Queen (except when she throws things). She has never forgotten that my dear mother, God rest her soul, died saving her life last year. My mother was Her Majesty's close companion, and the Queen was almost as sad as I was when she died. So she made me a Maid of Honour, though I was only twelve, and vowed to protect me always. And now I am also Her Majesty's secret Lady Pursuivant. If she should cut off my head, who would then pursue all wrongdoers who trouble the Queen's peace? Oh, dear, Her Majesty is glaring our way. I shall put my daybooke away for a while before some accident befalls it. Later this Day, still in the Queen's Presence Chamber The royal storm has now abated--but it was most exciting while it lasted. Her Majesty paced up and down, flapping a letter she'd just received, looking as if she would breathe fire on the poor messenger, who cowered in the doorway waiting for an answer. "What do you think is in that letter?" Lady Sarah whispered. "Mayhap there is another problem with the new coin Her Majesty is having minted," Mary Shelton suggested as she laid down the bonnet she is embroidering for her new niece. "What problems are those?" asked Lady Jane, wide-eyed. I was surprised that Lady Jane could have missed the tantrums and countless changes of mind the Queen had had. It had taken Her Majesty months to choose a design that pleased her. Mr. Anthony, her engraver, was up to the palace with new designs almost every day. We were all greatly relieved when Her Majesty finally declared that the pattern of a griffin rampant would adorn the new, pure silver coin. Her Majesty told me once that

she thinks the griffin to be the epitome of nobility, with its head of an eagle and its body of a lion. I think it looks a bit ugly, but I wouldn't tell the Queen! Lady Sarah sniffed and shook her coppery locks. "Your ears are stoppered unless people are talking about you," she told Lady Jane. There is not much love lost between Lady Sarah Bartelmy and Lady Jane Coningsby. They each consider themselves the most beautiful of the Maids, and it leads to a good deal of bickering. They both want to make good marriages, and they see themselves as rivals for the favours of the young gentlemen of the Court. I myself have no time for such silliness. "How dare you! You foolish flax-wench!" spluttered Lady Jane. "But I thought the problems with the coin had all been settled," said Penelope Knollys. "Silence!" bellowed the Queen from the other end of the chamber. "May I not have a second's peace to think?" And she looked about her for another missile to throw. We ducked our heads down and busied ourselves with our work. As there was nothing within reach, the Queen went on with her pacing. She always looks particularly impressive when she's angry, with her flame-red hair and her flashing eyes. Her white silk gown swished as she marched and her pearl ropes rattled with every step. Even the gold embroidery on her gown seemed to flash in temper. She wrestled with the letter as if about to tear it into shreds. "I cannot believe it," she said through clenched teeth. "Finally, all is well with the design of my new coin, and now Sir Edward Latimer dares to write me from the Royal Mint that there is not enough silver there to mint it! By heaven, they shall find silver quick enough when they hear of my wrath!" There was a whimper from the doorway and I thought the messenger was going to faint.

This series has hit its stride. By far this is the best one yet. The plot is more complex, and overall the book is more satisfying. I'm looking forward to the next installment of the series.

A very good read that kept the reader guessing until the end. A wonderful addition to the Lady Grace Mysteries.

In this book, coinage or coin forgery in Elizabeth's reign is the theme. As one of a coin collector, I am very interested in the scene of the Tower Mint. Although this series is for YA, adults such as I, sixty years old, are easily submerged in the story. Historical details are well investigated. Fair held on frozen Thames and people are described as if the author saw them.

Written in a personal journal format, this is a first-person narrative that takes the reader on a haunting ride back into the realm of British royalty in the sixteenth century. This is the fourth book in

the Lady Grace Mystery Series. However, this is a book that stands well on its own without fear of being lost in a labyrinth of intricate relationships formed in previous books. This is a more advanced historical fiction novel with a hearty helping of mystery and intrigue that will largely appeal to girls in the sixth to ninth grades. One downside to this book is the somewhat lengthy and wordy dialogue. There is also a slight possibility that some children may become turned off on the idea of reading about individuals who they have very little in common with. Overall, however this is a fine introductory book into the complicated and sometimes treacherous world of English aristocracy. The story is unique, and unfolds at a good pace, and most significantly the characters are memorable: delightfully comic and full of personality. Perhaps the main downside is that the book ends so soon. This is a perfect book to serve as an accompaniment to a classroom exploration and discussion on British royalty. There is also an interesting section at the conclusion of this book which discusses at length the historical background of the Tower of London. This is a nice touch as it provides historically accurate information that is relevant to the story and provides a context of reality in a book of fiction.

This is the fourth book in the Lady Grace Mysteries series, about Lady Grace Cavendish, a thirteen-year-old Maid of Honour at the court of Queen Elizabeth I. It's late November of 1569, and thirteen-year-old Lady Grace Cavendish, a Maid of Honour to Queen Elizabeth I, can't wait to visit the Frost Fair on the frozen river Thames. But while visiting the fair, she and her fellow Maids discover a dead body in a boat frozen into the ice. When Grace discovers that the dead man's body has two coins on his eyes, and that those coins are counterfeit copies of a new coin that has not yet been released, she knows she has another mystery to solve. With the help of her best friends, Ellie the laundry maid, and Masou the tumbler, Grace is determined to find the villain responsible for the counterfeiting and murder. But every suspect seems to lead to a dead end. Will Grace find the true criminal in time? This is another great Elizabethan mystery adventure with the very likable Lady Grace Cavendish. Told in the form of Grace's diary, this book not only has a great story, but brings to life the world of England in 1569. Readers who enjoyed the first three Lady Grace Mysteries won't want to miss this book, and new readers who love historical mysteries should definitely give this series a try. I can't wait to read the fifth book in this series!

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Deception by Grace, Lady Cavendish, is not very compelling and rather plodding at times. This novel could have been 20 pages shorter - perhaps then it would have flowed like the east side of the Thames, not like the frozen end where most of the story takes place. Even when the story floats us to the free-flowing end of the river, I still had a hard time following our tenacious trio, Grace, Ellie and Masou, because the action was overwrought with dramatic gestures and just plain boring. Where the first novels, Assassin and Betrayal are thrilling at times, nowhere in this novel did I find myself wondering "what's going to happen next?" ...frankly, because I didn't care. Patricia Finney, unfortunately, is not "writing as Grace Cavendish", but two other authors are, and I wonder if this tag-team approach mangled the once enjoyable and promising series. We are only up to D...hopefully, Patricia Finney will take up the quill again. I wish I could recommend this book without trepidation, but I just can't. I do agree with the previous review, that the Elizabethan world of the Frost Fair is well represented. Too bad the mystery was left out in the cold as a result! Exile is the next installment of the Lady Grace Mysteries.

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