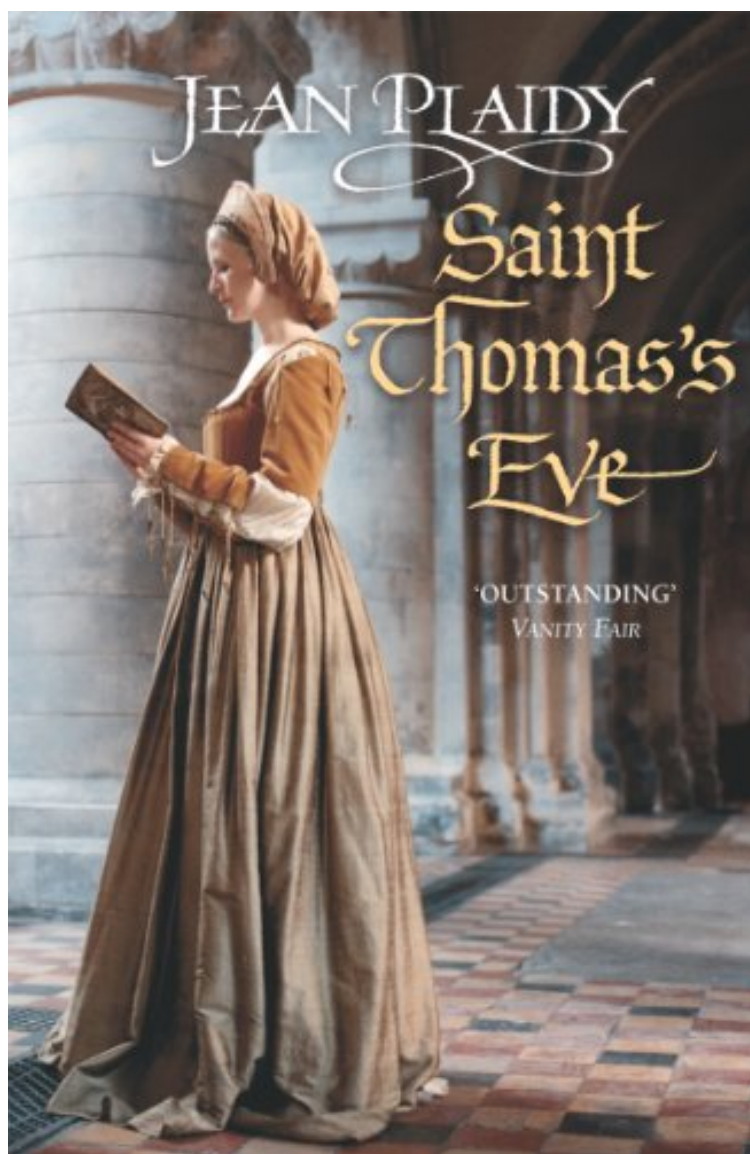


[Read and download] File size: 36.Mb

Saint Thomas's Eve: (Tudor Saga)



Par Jean Plaidy
audiobook | *ebooks | Download PDF
| ePub | DOC

Dtails sur le produit Publi le: 2011-02-15
Sorti le: 2011-02-15
Format: Ebook
Kindle

[Read and download] Saint Thomas's Eve: (Tudor Saga)

Par Jean Plaidy : Saint Thomas's Eve: (Tudor Saga) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Saint Thomas's Eve: (Tudor Saga):

 Download

 Read Online

Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurAnother splendid Tudor novel from Jean Plaidy - departing from her usual tales of passions and scandal in the court of Henry VIII, Saint Thomas's Eve tells the story of Sir Thomas More and his ambitious daughters.Henry VII once warned his son, the future King of England, not to trust Thomas More; years later that same son made More his confidante and advisor. But the allegiance is dangerously one-sided. A family man, lawyer and writer, More's ambitions are humble, whilst Henry's are endless.As More's career at court rises so too does his religious fervour, much to the concern of his eldest daughter, Margaret More. Meg, as she is fondly called, is torn between her heretic husband and the secrets her father has confided in her, and already fears that one day her father will make the ultimate sacrifice for his

faith.Extrait1 "And who is this man who dares oppose us?" demanded the King. "Who is this Thomas More? Eh? Answer me that." The King was angry. He sat very straight in the royal chair, one slender hand lying on the purple velvet, which covered the table, the other stroking the ermine, which covered his mantle. He was battling to subdue his rage, to preserve his habitual calm; for he was a shrewd man and his life had taught him that unheated words were more effective than the sword. He looked from one to the other of the two men who sat with him at the velvet-covered table where lay the documents which had absorbed their attention until the entrance of the man Tyler. "You, Empson! You, Dudley! Tell me this: Who is this man More?" "Methinks I have heard his name, Your Grace," said Sir Edmund Dudley. "But I know him not." "We should be more careful whom we allow to be elected as our London burgesses." "Indeed yes, Your Grace," agreed Sir Richard Empson. The King's fury was getting the better of him. He was glaring distastefully at Master Tyler, that gentleman of the Privy Chamber who had brought the news; and it was not this king's habit to blame men for the news they brought. Tyler trembled; he was fervently wishing that he had allowed someone else to acquaint the King with the news that his Parliament--owing to the pithily-worded arguments of one of the youngest burgesses--had refused to grant him the sum of money for which he had asked. There was one other in the room of the palace of Richmond, and he--a boy of thirteen--was staring idly out of the window watching a barge on the river, wishing he were the gallant who accompanied the fair young lady as they went gaily on to Hampton; he could see them well, for his eyesight was keen. The sun was shining on the water, which was almost the same color as the dress of the young lady. This Prince was already fond of ladies, and they were fond of him. Although young as yet, he was already as tall as many men and showed promise of shooting up to great stature. His skin was fair and his hair had a tinge of red in it so that it shone like the gold ornaments on his clothes. Now he had forgotten the young lady; he wished to be playing tennis, beating any who challenged him, listening to the compliments they paid, pretending not to hear, while they pretended not to know he listened. For two years he had been aware of such adulation; and how could he, who so loved adulation, feel really sorry that his brother had died? He had loved Arthur; he had admired him as his elder brother; but it was as though he had lost a coarse frieze garment and, because of his loss, found himself the possessor of a doublet of velvet and cloth of gold. He was conscious that he was a prince who would one day be a king. And when I am, he told himself, I shall not sit in council with such mumping oafs as Master Dudley and Master Empson. I shall not worry my head with the hoarding of money, but the spending of it. I shall have merry men about me--fat spenders, not lean misers. "And you, my son," he heard his father say, "what of you? Have you heard aught of this fellow More?" The boy rose and came to the table to stand in homage before the King. My son! pondered the King. What a king he will make! What resemblance he bears to the hated House of York! I see his grandfather, Edward of York, in that proud carriage. And the boy's father was faintly worried, for he remembered Edward the Fourth in his latter years when the tertian fever had laid hold of him and, like a mischievous scribe, had added a smudge here, a line there, until an ugly mask had made a palimpsest of his once beautiful face. But not only the fever had done this; it had been aided by the life he led: too much good food, too much good wine; too many women--anyhow, anywhere, from serving wenches to duchesses. Such debauchery took toll of a man. I must speak with this son of mine, thought the King. I must set his feet on the rightful path. I must teach him how to save money and keep it. Money is Power, and Power is a king's heritage; and if that king be a Tudor king--a young tree, the prey of sly and subtle pests, in danger of being overcome by older shrubs who claimed that young tree's territory--then that Tudor king must have wealth, for wealth buys soldiers and arms to support him; wealth buys security. He was not displeased with his own acquisitions; but when he had filled one coffer, he was eager to fill another. Everything he touched did not turn to gold as easily as he would wish. The touch of Midas was in his shrewd brain, not in his fingers. Ah well, he would then thank God for that shrewd brain. War drained the coffers of other kings; it filled those of Henry Tudor. He used war; he did not allow war to use him. He could draw money from the people by telling them that they must do battle with their enemies the French and the Scots; and the people were ready to pay, for they believed that the bread of righteous anger thrown upon the waters of conquest would yield rich booty. But Henry the Seventh knew that war took all the treasure that was offered, demanded more, and in exchange for so much riches gave pestilence, hunger and poverty. So the King, having collected his money, would make a speedy peace; and that which was intended to bring war to the enemies of England, brought wealth to England's king. He was a king who had suffered from many insurrections; insecure, since he was a bastard branch of the royal tree, grafted on by an indiscreet widowed queen, there had been many to oppose him. Yet each year saw him more firmly seated on the throne. He did not demand the blood of those who planned to destroy him: he only

asked for their lands and goods. Thus he grew richer every year. He now looked at the boy who stood before him, not as a father might look at his son, but as a king regarding his successor. Last year, the Queen had died in childbed, and the King was eager to get himself a new wife. This was the only son left to him; and the death of Arthur, so recently a bridegroom, had been a bitter blow. The loss of the Queen was not so important; there were many women in the world--royal women--who would not hesitate to become the wife of the King of England; and it was pleasurable to contemplate that wives brought dowries. Secretly he was not sorry to see the end of Queen Elizabeth. She had been a good, meek wife; she had given him several children; but she was of the House of York, and reasonable as he was, he had found that hard to forget. "Well, my son?" "I have met the man More, Your Grace." "Then tell me what you know of him." "He is a lawyer, Sire, and it was when I was at Eltham with my sisters that I saw him. He came with Mountjoy and the scholar, Erasmus; for Erasmus was visiting Mountjoy whom he had once tutored." "Yes," said the King, "and what manner of man was this More?" "Of medium height, I should say, Sire. Of bright complexion. And he had merry eyes and a way of speech that provoked much laughter." "Methinks his way of speech provoked much parsimony in our Parliament. And that we will not have. Is that all you can tell us?" "That is all, Sire." The King waved his hand, and the Prince, bowing, went back to his stool. "He should be heavily fined," declared the King. "He is not a rich man, Your Grace," murmured Empson. "A scholar, a writer, a lawyer . . . little could be extorted from him." The King could trust his henchmen, Empson and Dudley. They were of his own kind. They had their private greed; they enriched themselves while they enriched the King. "He has a father, Sire," said Dudley. "Who," added Empson, "might be good for a hundred pounds." "Put him in the Tower." "On the charge of possessing a disloyal son, Your Grace?" "Nay. Nay. You know better than that. Look into his affairs, then bring some charge against him. See what goods he hath; then we will decide on the fine. And do so with all speed." The King wished to be alone with his son. The boy, when he had stood before him, had aroused anxieties within him and temporarily they had swamped his anger at the failure to obtain as much money as he wished. This was because of the boy's appearance; the proud set of the head on the shoulders, the dazzlingly fair skin, the vital hair that was almost the color of gold, the small sensual mouth, the bright blue eyes had reminded the King so vividly of the boy's maternal grandfather; and he remembered the profligacy of that man. He felt the need, therefore, to talk with his son immediately. When they were alone he addressed him. "Henry." The boy rose at once, but his father went on, "Nay; stay where you are. No ceremony whilst we are alone. Now I would speak to you as father to son." "Yes, Father." "One day, my boy, you will be king of this realm." "Yes, Father." "Three years ago, we did not know that you were destined for such greatness. Then you were merely the King's second son, who, your father had decided, should become Archbishop of Canterbury. Now your steps are turned from Church to Throne. My son, do you know that the cares of kingship outweigh the glory and the honor?" The boy answered, "Yes, Father." But he did not believe this. So it might be with lean, pale men such as his father, whose thoughts were all of filling their coffers; but if a king were young and handsome and the eyes of ladies lightened as they rested upon him, and those of the young men were warm with envy and admiration, that was a different matter. The glory and the honor could outweigh the care; and if they did not do so in the case of Henry the Seventh, Henry the Eighth would see to it that they did so for him. "Many temptations come to kings, my son. You would do well to study the history of those who have gone before." "That I do, Father. My Lord Mountjoy insisted that I did so when he tutored me." "There are times when a king is beset on all sides, when traitors rise and threaten him. Then he must act with speed and wisdom." "I know it, Sire." "You know then why I wish you to be present at our councils. I hope you do not spend your time staring idly through the windows, dreaming of sport and pleasure. I would have you learn from what you hear at these our meetings." "I do, Father." "There are some who would have sent that fellow More to the Tower and would have had his head on London Bridge for what he has done. But such acts are folly. Remember this: Let the people think that the Parliament guides the King; but let the members of the Parliament know that the King has a hundred ways of striking at them if they obey him not." "The people are not pleased," said the boy boldly. "They like not taxes, and they say that there have been too many taxes. They murmur against Dudley and Empson." He dared not say they murmured against the King, but he knew the people would never love his father as he believed they would love his father's son. When he went into the streets they called his name. "God bless the Prince! God bless Prince Hal!" The sound of their cheers was sweeter than the music of his lute, and he loved his lute dearly. His father could not tell him how a king should behave. "There must be those to do a king's work," said King Henry, "and if it be ugly work, then it is the duty of those to bear the reproaches of the people. My son, you will one day be not only a king, but a

rich king. When I slew the traitor Crookback at Bosworth Field and took the crown, I found I had inherited a bankrupt kingdom." "A right noble act it was to slay the traitor!" said the boy. "Yet coming to the throne as we have done is a dangerous way. Never forget it. Be watchful. Above all, learn from those who have gone before. Use the lessons of the past to overcome the dangers of the future. You remind me of your grandfather, great King Edward, for you have something of his lineaments and his stature. Ah, there was a man!" Father and son smiled as they thought of the boy's grandfather. With his beauty and charm, thought the King, he lured taxes from his people's pockets and he called them "Benevolences." Oh, for such power! He roamed the countryside as an ordinary gentleman, thought the Prince; and such was his charm and beauty that no woman could resist him. Oh, for such power! The sun's rays slanted through the windows of Richmond Palace and as the father began to talk to the son of the delights and dangers of kingship, they ceased to think of Thomas More. Meanwhile in the grounds of a pleasant old mansion in the little village of Stepney, the object of the King's wrath was walking arm in arm with one of his greatest friends, his confessor, Dr. John Colet, a man whose wit and learning delighted him almost as much as the affection they bore each other. Colet, some ten years older than Thomas More, was listening gravely to his friend's account of what had happened in the Parliament. He shook his head. " 'Twas a brave act, I'll grant you; but there is a point in human nature where bravery may be called folly, and folly, bravery." "Is it better to be a brave fool or a wise coward? Tell me that, John. I love the wise; I love the brave; and I love not cowards nor fools.

What a perverse thing is life when the wrong partners walk together!" John Colet was in no mood for laughter. He was alarmed. "Had it been anything but money, the King would have been the more ready to forgive you." "Had it been anything but money, would the King have been begging it from his Parliament? Nay, the King loves money. He loves the color of gold. He loves the sight of gold in his coffers . . . gold plate . . . gold coins. He rejoices in the knowledge that he is not only a king, but a rich king." "Friend Thomas, there is one thing you should take to heart. Now, I am an older man than you are. . . ." "I know it, thou graybeard." "Then know this also: If you wish to make an enemy of the King, get between him and the money he hopes to win. Thus--and more quickly than in any other way--can you rouse his wrath. And, Thomas, remember this now and for ever: It is a perilous thing to set yourself against a king." "Revue de presse" Her novels are still very much to be enjoyed ... Any writer who can both educate and thrill a reader of any age deserves to be remembered and find new fans ... One only has to look at the TV/Media to see that the appetite for this kind of writing is still very much there" (Matt Bates WH Smith Travel) "Jean Plaidy doesn't just write the history, she makes it come alive." (Julia Moffat, RNA) "Plaidy excels at blending history with romance and drama" (New York Times) "Full-blooded, dramatic, exciting" (Observer) "Plaidy brings home the tyranny of Tudor government...In manners and customs...Plaidy is thoroughly at home." (Times Literary Supplement)