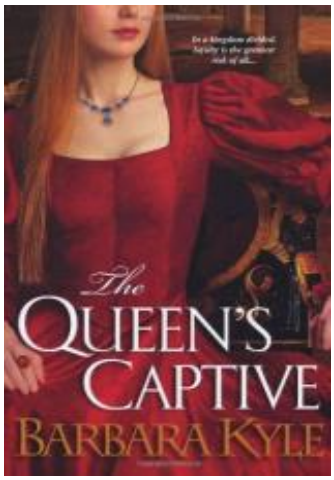
ReadingGroupGuides
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The Queen's Captive

by Barbara Kyle



About the Book

England, 1554. In the wake of the failed Wyatt Rebellion, a vengeful Queen Mary has ordered all conspirators captured and executed. Among the imprisoned is her own sister, 21-year-old Princess Elizabeth. Though she protests her innocence, Elizabeth?s brave stand only angers Mary more.

Elizabeth longs to gain her liberty --- and her sister?s crown. In Honor and Richard Thornleigh and their son, Adam, the young princess has loyal allies. Disgusted by Queen Mary?s proclaimed intent to burn heretics, Honor visits Elizabeth in the Tower and they quickly become friends. And when Adam foils a would-be assassin, Elizabeth?s gratitude swells into a powerful --- and mutual --- attraction. But while Honor is willing to risk her own safety for her future queen, aiding in a new rebellion against the wrathful Mary will soon lead her to an impossible choice?

Riveting, masterfully written, and rich in intricate details, **The Queen?s Captive** brings one of history?s most fascinating and treacherous periods to vibrant, passionate life.

Discussion Guide

1. In trying to keep Elizabeth safe from Queen Mary?s wrath, Honor decides to become a double agent. She pretends to be Mary?s spy serving as Elizabeth?s lady, but is actually keeping watch on Mary when she reports to her. Did you feel that Honor was taking on something too dangerous with this scheme? Were the stakes worth the danger?

2. Given Queen Mary?s desperate need to have a child to be her heir, how did her phantom pregnancy make you feel? Did you think she was honestly mistaken, or willfully deluding herself?

3. Adam falls in love with Elizabeth almost the first moment he sees her. Later, when he is recovering from his arrow wound, he indulges in an erotic flirtation with her. Did you think this was risky behavior on Adam?s part, since she is so

far above him in rank?

4. Honor watches in agony as her friend George Mitford, condemned to burn at the stake, dies a horrible death. Queen Mary?s policy of burning heretics was cruel, yet it was no different from the policy of other European monarchs. How do you view this aspect of the period --- as necessary state orthodoxy, or religious paranoia?

5. Richard battles Queen Mary?s bills in Parliament, which leads Mary to intimidate Honor. Frightened, Honor tells Richard that they must flee England, and she starts packing. But Richard stops her, insisting that they stay and fight. They argue bitterly about it, and he walks out. Who do you believe was right?

6. Honor gets deeply involved in the planned rebellion led by Sir Henry Dudley and she asks Elizabeth to give the rebels some financial aid, or at least a word of encouragement. But Elizabeth refuses, fearing it will endanger her. Honor accuses her of being selfish, and they argue. Do you think Elizabeth was being cowardly, or wise?

7. Grenville arrests Honor and threatens her with torture on the rack unless she signs a statement implicating Elizabeth in the Dudley conspiracy. Honor knows that if she signs, the Queen will execute Elizabeth for treason. She decides to endure the torture. How did Honor?s decision make you feel? Was she right to protect Elizabeth?

8. Frances Grenville is so obsessed with Adam Thornleigh that she blackmails him into agreeing to marry her. Otherwise, she says, she will turn in his stepmother as a convicted heretic. Did you feel any pity for Frances?

9. Adam finds Elizabeth preparing to flee England to avoid her sister marrying her to a foreign nobleman. Adam gladly offers to take her on his ship, and they set out together. When they stop for the night, they become lovers. In your view, was Adam being irresponsible, or can he be forgiven for hoping that ?love conquers all??

10. Grenville has tortured Honor and kept Richard in a dungeon for months. When they are back home following their ordeal, Richard tells Honor that he?s had enough, so he?s going after Grenville --- it?s kill or be killed, he says. Honor dreads that this can only lead to Richard?s death, and again they argue. Did you think Richard was right?

11. After Grenville abducts Richard and burns down the Thornleighs? house, Honor decides to confront Grenville, and kill him. How did Honor?s attack on her enemy make you feel? Was she justified in committing murder?

Author Bio

Barbara Kyle, a classically trained actor, enjoyed a successful career in Canadian television and theater before turning her hand to writing fiction. She and her husband live in Ontario, where she teaches popular writing seminars and workshops.

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