



Royal Road to Fotheringhay: The Story of Mary, Queen of Scots

Jean Plaidy

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The haunting story of the beautiful—and tragic—Mary, Queen of Scots, as only legendary novelist Jean Plaidy could write it

Mary Stuart became Queen of Scotland at the tender age of six days old. Her French-born mother, the Queen Regent, knew immediately that the infant queen would be a vulnerable pawn in the power struggle between Scotland's clans and nobles. So Mary was sent away from the land of her birth and raised in the sophisticated and glittering court of France. Unusually tall and slim, a writer of music and poetry, Mary was celebrated throughout Europe for her beauty and intellect. Married in her teens to the Dauphin François, she would become not only Queen of Scotland but Queen of France as well. But Mary's happiness was short-lived. Her husband, always sickly, died after only two years on the throne, and there was no place for Mary in the court of the new king. At the age of twenty, she returned to Scotland, a place she barely knew.

Once home, the Queen of Scots discovered she was a stranger in her own country. She spoke only French and was a devout Catholic in a land of stern Presbyterians. Her nation was controlled by a quarrelsome group of lords, including her illegitimate half brother, the Earl of Moray, and by John Knox, a fire-and-brimstone Calvinist preacher, who denounced the young queen as a Papist and a whore. Mary eventually remarried, hoping to find a loving ally in the Scottish Lord Darnley. But Darnley proved violent and untrustworthy. When he died mysteriously, suspicion fell on Mary. In haste, she married Lord Bothwell, the prime suspect in her husband's murder, a move that outraged all of Scotland. When her nobles rose against her, the disgraced Queen of Scots fled to England, hoping to be taken in by her cousin Elizabeth I. But Mary's flight from Scotland led not to safety, but to Fotheringhay Castle...

“Plaidy excels at blending history with romance and drama.” —*New York Times*

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